

MEMOIRS
OF
M. DE BRINBOC:
CONTAINING
SOME VIEWS
OF
ENGLISH AND FOREIGN SOCIETY.

“ Je fais qu'il est indubitable
Que pour former œuvre parfait,
Il faudrait se donner au diable
Et c'est ce que je n'ai pas fait.”

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS

OF

M. DE BRINBOC.

CHEVREVILLE was neither surprised or alarmed by Eugenie's sudden flight from Fontenaye-aux-roses, it was an event which his previous knowledge of her intentions had led him to expect, and from which he hoped to profit, to the utmost extent of his wishes.

As soon as he received this information by means of the faithless Paquin, he hastened to his friend the Secretary,

and told him that their common interest now required an increase of vigilance, lest their intended prey should escape from their pursuit, as he made no doubt that a foreign minister would soon intercede with government, that Eugenie might be permitted to leave France. The credulous Secretary fully persuaded that Chevreville meant to share with him the spoils of injured innocence, promised again to lend him all the assistance in his power, and assured him that Eugenie's passport should be made out in such a manner, as would expose her to be stopped on the journey.

Chevreville asked no more, every thing else he conceived to depend upon himself, and he was too well satisfied with his own prowess in undertakings of this nature, to feel much apprehension for the final result of his operations.

In the mean time, the gentle Eugenie
was

was grateful to heaven for the place of refuge which it afforded her, in the inviolable mansion of the Count Starinski, and as several weeks had elapsed without her hearing any thing more about Chevreville or his wicked projects, she concluded that he had entirely forgotten her, and that he was not the determined villain that Madame de Latouche had represented him.

Truth, at whose shrine we must sacrifice every other consideration, obliges us to confess that this reflection was gratifying to Eugenie, and that she was pleased at being enabled to consider as less criminal, the man whom she formerly imagined to be worthy of her esteem. Nor let it be said with more precipitation than judgment, that this amiable girl still harboured sentiments of affection for Chevreville,—she never loved him. The artful seducer had appeared before

Eugenie as the intimate friend and almost adopted child of her revered father; he had skilfully acted the part of a man of high honour, and a sufferer in a cause common to both, and his language in her presence, was a faithful echo of what she had been accustomed to hear from her beloved brother. Encased in the impenetrable armour of simulation and hypocrisy, it is no wonder that a consummate deceiver, should impose upon the unsuspecting mind of an innocent female; but luckily for Eugenie's peace, as well as for her honour, the whole fabric of delusion had been completely destroyed, ere esteem had ripened into a more powerful attachment, and if it was painful to part with the former, it was bliss to consider that she was not compelled to sacrifice the latter of those sentiments, in obedience to the commands of duty,

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of prudence, and of self-respect. Thus it is easy to reconcile Eugenie's satisfaction in supposing Chevreville less guilty than he really was, with the most perfect indifference for the man.

The scenes which Mad. Starinski's house exhibited, were, from their novelty, well adapted to dispel the gloom that recent occurrences might have spread over the susceptible mind of Eugenie. The forenoon was chiefly occupied in receiving the visits of the Countess's old acquaintances, who had escaped transportation, the lantern-rope, and the guillotine, and who were glad to meet in a place where they could talk over their misfortunes, without fear of being interrupted by a troop of armed citizens, with instructions to convey them to gaol.

In the evening the company was made up of some of the law-givers of

the day, and most of the foreign ministers of the powers at peace with France, and of all the literati who still adhered to the doctrine of perfectibility, with as much tenaciousness, as the Jews do to their hopes of a future Messiah. *

To the first mentioned part of this motley assemblage, Mad. Starinski was not wanting in the distribution of her smiles and attentions, for several strong and obvious reasons; and while she committed the diplomatic corps, to the respect and consideration of her husband, she shone herself with unrivalled splendour among the literary characters, who adorned her drawing room. These in their turn, endeavoured to reflect back some portion of intellectual light upon their fair entertainer, an effort to which they were stimulated with redoubled ardour, from the combined circumstances of having a great taste for

for the Countess's witticisms, and a no less relish for her dinners and suppers, which fact goes to establish the remark, made by certain profound observers, that the learned are often blessed with very sharp appetites, and that they gladly indulge in the luxuries of good living, while they descant on the advantages of temperance and sobriety. The dialogues that took place at Mad. Starinskî's were sometimes rather more remarkable for affording an unlimited scope to fancy and allusion, than for severity of morals ; and on these occasions the Countess, who was a woman of uncommon dexterity, always contrived to seat Eugenie near a legislator who entertained her by expatiating on the sensible growth of republican virtues ; or else close to one of the plenipotentiaries, whose insipid compliments, and common-place civilities, served like

cotton, to flop up her ears, and prevent the introduction of more obnoxious sounds. What was most amusing, was to observe the burlesque dignity with which the new rulers of the State, received the submissive adulation and servile homage of the bowing representatives of foreign powers.

Thus did Eugenie pass away the time, which was occasionally enlivened by Mad. de Flavigny's friendly visits, when she was told one day by Count Starinski, that it was at last in his power to offer her a proper person to accompany her out of France. This person was a messenger whom he was about to send with dispatches to Berlin, a kind of mission, which would effectually secure them from any interruption on the road. Mad. de Flavigny, notwithstanding her age and infirmities, offered to share the dangers of the journey with her dear friend,

But

but this was an exertion which Eugenie would not hear of, and they parted, after a thousand manifestations of love and tenderness on both sides. The Count and Countess then embraced Eugenie, for whom they had contracted sentiments of real affection, and the latter told the messenger to be even more careful of the fair traveller, than of his dispatches, for that of Eugenie there could be no duplicate.

CHAP. XLVII.

THE messenger was an honest German, of grave deportment, and military aspect, who did not trouble Eugenie with much conversation, but in exchange, he regaled her from time to time with volumes of smoke, first inhaled from a long tobacco-pipe, and then rendered more savoury by taking their vent through his mouth and nostrils.

Perceiving, however, that his fellow traveller seemed rather dejected, and out of spirits, he begged her not to give way to melancholy, for that he had a sabre and four horse-pistols entirely at her service, a piece of information that only served to add to Eugenie's terrors,

for she expected every minute that by the motion of the carriage, one of the pistols would go off, and lodge its contents in her own body, or in that of her conductor. Having followed the route of La Ferté and Chalons-sur-Marne, towards the Rhine, for two days, without meeting any difficulty or molestation, Eugenie began to be sanguine in her hopes of soon finding herself beyond the reach of her enemies, and of embracing the friend of her infancy, whom she had not seen for so many years.

On the evening of the second day, while they were taking some refreshment at the inn at P—, a municipal officer came into the room, and asked the messenger if he was not the person charged with dispatches from Paris to Berlin? "Yes," answered the German. "Then Sir," resumed the officer, "you are at liberty to continue your journey

whenever you please, but as for this lady, (pointing to Eugenie,) she must go with me before the sub-prefect, who thinks that there are strong reasons for detaining her."

It does not require any great effort of imagination, to fancy the emotions of terror and surprise that seized the gentle sister of Brinboc, when she heard this formidable sentence, and she was so much and so dreadfully alarmed, as not to be able to make any reply. Her faithful guardian, however, endeavoured to speak for her, and in his arguments to lay much stress upon the circumstance of her having been committed to his care by an ambassador, who from the nature of his public character, could not have taken any interest in the safety and welfare of an improper or suspicious person. "Pshaw!" exclaimed the insolent understrapper, "don't talk to

me about ambassadors, whose masters we have beaten, a corporal of the national guard is a much greater man, in my opinion." With these words, he laid hold of Eugenie's arm to drag her away, and all that her tears and intreaties could obtain from the stern satellite of power, was that the messenger should be allowed to accompany them to the place of examination.

As soon as the sub-prefect had dispatched the business of some other persons, according to the order in which they had presented themselves before his tribunal, he addressed Eugenie, and told her, that he was under the necessity of interrupting her journey, because he had been informed by the *gen d'arme*,*

A *Gen d'arme* is a sort of military tipstaff in France, of whose power and functions, we have, thank God, but an imperfect notice, in England. He is more courteous than a Janissary, and better armed than a bairn-bailiff, but related to both, as well in dignity of office, as in public estimation.

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who inspected her passport at the town gates, that her person did not agree with the description therein given, and that he would examine it himself, to see if this report was correct.

Eugenie's demeanour was certainly such as might have created suspicion, in the most unprejudiced spectators, for she trembled from head to foot, and was so much agitated, that she could hardly hand the paper to the sub-prefect, who read it attentively, and then eyed Eugenie with great care and deliberation, after which he addressed her in the following words :

“ Madam, I cannot conceive how you could think of escaping with such an irregular passport, or how you could have been allowed to proceed so far without interruption. The remissness of others, however, would afford no excuse for my negligence, and I must order you

into

into confinement until some light is thrown on this business, for you are described in the paper as being of a fair complexion, with light hair and light eyes, whereas your eyes and hair, are both as black as my hat, besides, that you are not so tall by three inches, as represented in this description."

Here he waved his hand to one of the attendants, as if to take Eugenie out of court, but this was now become an office of some difficulty, for she had fainted before the sub-prefect had quite delivered his commands, and she was supported by two women, whom curiosity had attracted to learn what might be the fate of the suspected lady, whose arrest had already created a great noise in the town.

While they were endeavouring to bring Eugenie to herself, a man rushed into the hall, exclaiming, "Where is

is she? where is my wife? my ungrateful wife!"

The attention of the whole assembly was instantly removed from the unfortunate Eugenie, to the clamorous stranger, who went up directly to the sub-prefect, and desired him in the name of the law, to stay all further proceedings against the fugitive, whom he affirmed to be his wedded wife. He then approached Eugenie, and going on his knees, cried out in a tremulous and broken tone of voice, "Eugenie! dearest Eugenie! what could induce you to leave the fondest of husbands? I am ready to forget all,—if my entreaties have no effect on you, remember at least our infant child, whom you have abandoned, and who claims your care and affection." Eugenie opened her eyes, and beheld before her the accursed form of Chevreville. She remained silent

silent for some moments, during which time she seemed to recover her strength. She then disengaged herself from the women who had been supporting her, and with a firm step and calm countenance, walked to the table at which sat the sub-prefect, and assured him that she was not the wife of any man; that she was indeed flying from the persecution of the impostor who claimed her as his own, though she only knew him by his villainous proceedings towards her, and she besought the magistrate, as he valued the importance of his trust, and every principle of honour and compassion, not to deliver her up, defenceless and unprotected, to the horrible designs of her base and cruel enemy.

All this was spoken with a composure and dignity of manner, that surprized the sub-prefect, and astonished the bystanders, and the former was about to make

make an answer, when Chevreville exclaimed "Perfidious woman! since you are deaf to the voice of my affectionate supplications, I will shew you and the world, that I have justice on my side, and that I am not to be traduced and slandered with impunity.—Here Citizen sub-prefect, read aloud, if you please; the proofs of my misfortune, and of this woman's perjured faith." He then presented the sub-prefect with two papers, both of which being read in an audible voice, the one was a certificate from the mayor of a district in the department of the Seine, stating that Chevreville had been married to Eugenie according to law, on the fifteenth day of the sprouting month (Germinal) of the first year of liberty and equality; and the other contained an order from the police of Paris, directed to all prefects, sub-prefects, mayors and their deputies, adjuncts, &c.

to assist citizen Chevreville in the recovery of his strayed wife, &c. &c.

During the perusal of these documents an awful silence had reigned throughout the assembly, which was now increased to the greatest number the apartment could possibly contain, insomuch that the play-house was nearly deserted that night, and each individual weighed, in his own mind the probable sentence of the impartial judge, which the great majority conceived must be in favour of the plaintiff, when the former, laying down the papers that he had just read, asked Eugenie if she had any thing to allege against the proofs they contained of the justness of her husband's claim? "I take Heaven and earth to witness," answered Eugenie, in a resolute voice, "that the whole is a base forgery, and that I am not that man's, or any man's wife. As to the erroneous description of my person

son in the passport, I cannot tell how it came there; but that circumstance in itself ought to be a presumption in my favour: for if I had not been conscious of my innocence, and of my full right to go wherever I thought proper, I should have been more on my guard, and not trusted implicitly to common precautions, as it is evident I have done with regard to the passport. I must now request, sir, that you will hear what the person has to say with whom I travel, and under whose protection I was placed by an ambassador at Paris.'

The sub-prefect agreed to this proposal, and ordered the messenger to come forward and make his deposition; but alas! no messenger answered or appeared. It seems that this diplomatic piece of clock-work had calculated the exact number of days, hours, and minutes which he was commonly allowed

to spend on the road between Paris and Berlin ; and fearing that Eugenie's arrest might delay him beyond his usual time, he had gone back to the inn, and from thence proceeded on his journey, leaving the unfortunate sister of Brinboc to get out of her troubles as well as she could.

This unexpected desertion was a thunderstroke to Eugenie : she looked around her, and saw nothing but enemies, or person indifferent to her fate, and she stood motionless with horror and despair, while another pause of death-like silence took place, during which time Chevreville viewed his devoted victim with a sort of savage delight, and ferocious concupiscence.— At last the sub-prefect, either from weariness or conviction, told Eugenie that the night was far advanced ; that appearances, from the first onset, were by no means in her favour ; and that as

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she had nothing but a naked assertion to adduce, against positive proofs of her criminality, she must immediately return to the company and protection of the person who claimed her as his wife.—“Never! Never!” shrieked out Eugenie. “I will die a thousand deaths, sooner than put myself in the power of that monster.—I will cling to this table till I am cut to pieces—but I will not stir from hence.”—Then casting her eyes, drowned in tears, round the assembly.—“I see women here:—is there not one who will come to the assistance of a wretched, unprotected creature of her own sex?” Pathetick as this appeal was, it might just as well have been addressed to the winds or waves, for any effect that it produced on the callous feelings of the obdurate hearers; and the unfortunate Eugenie seemed to be totally abandoned to her cruel fate, when a great noise was heard

heard at the door, accompanied by several voices vociferating “*Place au Général,—Place au General.* *”

It would have appeared, a minute before, that the apartment could not contain another soul, but the general’s aid-du camps and attendants, by the help of a few kicks and cuffs which they bestowed pretty vigorously on all the members of the sovereign people that stood in their way, soon opened a road for their commander, who marched up to the sub-prefect, and throwing himself into a chair, asked him what all this racket was about, for that he could hardly get any supper at the inn, notwithstanding that he was much fatigued by his journey from the army of the Rhine and Moselle:—“some people,” continued the general, “say that you have stopt one of the *ci-devant* princesses,

* “ Make room for the General.”

while others affirm that it is the Queen of Sardinia in disguise, who was arrested by your orders."—"No, no," answered the sub-prefect, "it is only a runaway wife, whom we are about to restore to her loving husband. Nothing else, I assure you."—"Hah," exclaimed the general, let me see her;"—he then viewed Eugenie, whose distress had added a thousand charms to her native beauty, and resumed, "she is very pretty—very, very pretty indeed ; but for all that, I did not think there was a man in France so silly as to go in chace of a woman who thought proper to elope from him, were she as handsome as Helen :—shew me this amorous husband."—"That is he," answered the sub-prefect, "in the white great coat, standing near the clerk."—Eh, Eh ! what do I see? surely my eyes deceive me.—No, 'tis he—De ——"—"No, sir," said the sub-prefect,

fect, "the man's name is Chevreville."—
"Aye, aye," replied the general, "Chevreville, and Sacréeville, and as many more names as there are departments in the republic.—Citizen sub-prefect, this business assumes a very extraordinary appearance ; I must sift the matter to the bottom myself, and I desire that you will communicate every circumstance relating to the parties, which has fallen under your cognizance."

The sub-prefect then entered into a circumstantial detail of every occurrence with which the reader is already acquainted, and concluded his report, by assuring the general, that he had done nothing but what was exactly conformable to law. "Poo, poo" said the son of Mars, "a general who has won three battles in the service of his country, ought to know something about a point of law ; and my opinion concerning this affair is exactly the reverse of yours."

"Certainly!" exclaimed the aid-du-camps, "none but generals understand the laws."

He then addressed Eugenie, and desired her to tell him candidly who she was, and by what chance she had come into this disagreeable predicament.—

Eugenie, who soon began to revive again, and to consider the general in the light of a protecting angel, answered his interrogatories with so much ease, simplicity, and sweetness, that he felt doubly interested in her favour, and in his haste to serve her, interrupted her narrative, and told the sub-prefect, that he was sure the certificate of marriage, and the order from the police of Paris, were nothing but forgeries; and that if he would immediately set Eugenie at liberty, he (the general) would take all the responsibility upon himself.

The sub-prefect, who, although a lawyer by profession, had a much greater respect

respect for military interpretations of this sort, than for all the decrees of law-givers, from Justinian down to Anacharsis Cloots, complied without hesitation, and moreover undertook to correct the little irregularity in Eugenie's passport, that she might be no longer subject to any let or molestation in the prosecution of her intended journey.

The general next observed to the sub-prefect, that in order to complete their good work, it would be necessary to dispose of M. Chevreville, whom he knew to be one of the greatest villains in existence; and having commanded silence, he addressed the miscreant in these words : "Citizen Chevreville, you are allowed two hours to make the best of your way out of this district, after which time, if you are caught within its limits, I will have you bound hand and foot, and sent as a conscript to the army,

or shot without further ceremony, should you attempt to make any resistance."

No sooner was this judgment pronounced, than the hall resounded with shouts of "*Vive le General,*" and demonstrations of joy, for the liberation of the *jolie demoiselle*, manifested by those very caitiffs, who, a few minutes before, did not seem inclined to stir an inch to save her from perdition; and during this momentary tumult, Chevreville contrived to escape through the crowd, cursing the ill-fortune that had blasted all his schemes, even when they seemed most likely to be crowned with success.

The reader has doubtless anticipated, that the flaw in Eugenie's passport was the joint invention of Chevreville, and his worthy friend, the secretary in the foreign office at Paris; but he does not know that this indefatigable villain had followed Eugenie's chaise for two days, patiently

patiently awaiting the moment of her arrest, which was to serve as a signal for beginning the farce that we have just seen him perform in presence of the sub-prefect, and the rest of the good company. It is also necessary to add, for fear of mistakes, that the said sub-prefect was by no means privy to Chevreille's abominable plot, and if he bore at one time the appearance of an aider and abettor, it was rather from inadvertency or precipitation, than from any malicious design of his own.—As for Eugenie, she was carried back in triumph to the inn, escorted by the general and his followers, who were so prodigal of their attentions, that she began to fear she had only escaped one danger to encounter another ; but this suspicion proved to be without any foundation, for her military protector behaved towards her with the greatest delicacy and decorum,

like a man who still retained some sparks of genuine chivalry in his composition ; and he left her to the repose of which she stood so much in need, as soon as he had ordered a corporal and two dragoons to conduct her in safety to the borders of the Prussian territory. With this account of Eugenie's providential deliverance, we shall terminate this very long chapter, and return, for the last time, to the immediate scene of action, in which her brother was engaged.

CHAP. XLVIII.

PREVIOUS to Sir James M'Corcodale's departure from London, he had made two requests to Brinboc; the first and most important was, that should Madame de Rosenfelt arrive in England during his absence, the celebration of their nuptials might be delayed until his return, which he would accelerate, in order to be present at the consummation of his friend's happiness: the second, that Brinboc would go down to Lady Belmont's villa near Windsor, according to the invitation which they had both received, and there offer the Baronet's excuses, for not attending himself, accompanied and embellished by as many

fine things, as he might feel inclined to say on so favourable an occasion.

With the former of these requests, it was not difficult to comply, as long as Mad. de Rosenfelt forbore to make her appearance, and in regard to the latter, it was likely to prove an agreeable diversion to Brinboc, who had not yet formed many acquaintances in London.

He accordingly went down to Woodbine Lodge, where he was very cordially received by Lady Belmont, and the fair Celestina, who professed themselves willing to accept of Sir James's apology, on account of the ambassador by whom it was delivered.

Here Brinboc spent four or five days very pleasantly, with no other alloy to his enjoyments, than the reflection that his beloved, and the gentle Eugenie were still at a great distance, though fortunately for him, he little imagined the

the severe trials which his sister was undergoing at that very moment.

During the interval between breakfast and dinner, Lady Belmont and her daughter were occupied either in paying or receiving visits, which were almost innumerable, as the court was then at Windsor; and our hero used to avail himself of those opportunities, to range in the forest, and admire the beautiful scenery, which first inspired the poetic song of the bard of Twickenham.

Besides the family, half a dozen strangers sat down to dinner every day, and several others dropping in, in the course of the evening, afforded scope for indulging in the various pleasures of music, conversation, or cards, towards the last of which amusements her Ladyship entertained a pretty strong propensity.

As the company was always composed of people of fashion, and sometimes of persons of cultivated minds, Brinboc found the time glide away so agreeably, that he began to look forward to the period of departure with some degree of reluctance, when an event took place which hastened his return, without tending in the least to make it the more desirable.

On the last day which he passed at Woodbine Lodge, a gentleman came down from London, to dine with Lady Belmont, and during dinner-time he talked of nothing but politics, though any other subject might have seemed more proper for the occasion, considering that the fair sex constituted the greater part of the persons at table. But after the ladies, according to custom, retired to the drawing room, our orator's eloquence being now freed from all restraint,

straint, became more copious and fervid than ever, and he professed himself a patriot, in support of which character, he poured forth a bitter philippic against his own country, and a splendid eulogium in favour of its enemies. To the account of the former, he laid every crime and atrocity which had disgraced the world for the last seven years ; and in regard to the latter, he would not admit that they had been guilty of the most venial transgression against justice or humanity, to which they had not been driven by the abominable ambition and wickedness of their adversaries.

Brinboc, who had good reason to be acquainted with at least one side of the picture, was astonished at this new species of patriotism : he knew that it was not the patriotism of ancient Greece and Rome ; he believed it not to have been the patriotism of England's better

days ; and he was certain that it did not agree with the idea which his own mind formed of that virtue ; but as he was the last person in company who had any right to enter the lists upon this subject, he remained in silence, meditating on the strange and unaccountable perversion of reason and common sense, which could alone have given birth to this morbid affection, in the intellects of a man, who in other respects neither spoke or behaved like a fool or a maniac.

At last, the politician asked Brinboc if he was not an Emigrant ? and upon the latter answering in the affirmative, he threw out several harsh reflections on the erroneous conduct of that body of men, at the commencement of the revolution, to which he added some ungenerous remarks upon subsequent events, that respect for misfortune ought to

to have made him forbear, whatever might have been his private opinion.

In the mean while, Brinboc sat burning upon his chair, sometimes inclined to recriminate, and then again restrained by motives of prudence, and by an unwillingness to create a disturbance in the mansion of hospitality, till one of the company perceiving his ill-dissembled emotions, endeavoured to give the conversation another turn, and to palliate the asperity of the orator's sentiments; but he grew rather more furious from this kind of opposition, and at length forced the Emigrant to commence an oration *pro domo sua*, in the course of which, it is not impossible that he might have let drop something intemperate or incorrect, both from the poignancy of his feelings on the occasion, and from an imperfect mode of conveying his ideas in English.

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Whether so or not, the gentlemen no sooner got up to return to the room in which the ladies were waiting for them, than the irascible patriot whispered Brinboc that he conceived himself personally insulted by what he had said, and expected the satisfaction of a gentleman ; and when the latter remarked, that he had not been the aggressor in this dispute, the former replied with a sneer, that if *M. le Chevalier* did not wish to renew the discussion, for the benefit of the whole house, he would expect him the next morning, between the hours of six and seven, at Hyde Park Corner, to proceed from thence to a place which should be agreed on between their seconds. To this hostile declaration Brinboc only observed, that it was impossible for him to be prepared within the time allotted, as he must go to London to seek for his second,

cond, and the meeting was accordingly deferred, until the same hour of the following day.

The difference of opinion being thus rationally terminated for the present, the disputants joined the company, with great cheerfulness of look and manner, and Brinboc told Lady Belmont that he would be under the necessity of leaving her the next morning, as he had some business which required his attendance in town.

CHAP. XLIX.

“BEHOLD me now, (said Brinboc to himself, when on his way to London,) behold me now on the point of turning gladiator or pistolator, and of adding one more to the list of those who out of a mistaken notion of bravery, or out of dread of the animadversions of persons whom they despise, resolve to set the laws at defiance, and to outrage humanity as well as common sense. I know that out of ten duels, nine at least are the effects of pusillanimity in one or both of the parties, who swagger and bully through mere cowardice,* until

To be furious,
Is to be frightened out of fear : and in that mood,
The Dove will peck the Ostrich.

• *Shakespear.—Ant. & Cleop. Act iii.*

they

they are caught in their own springes, and forced to fight, whether they will or not ; and I likewise know that some gentlemen, who affected a great taste for duelling, afterwards proved themselves arrant poltroons, in situations which required true, and not constrained courage ; but as the world will have it so, I will do like the rest of the world, unless the world should be cured of its folly, before seven o'clock to-morrow morning."

This admirable soliloquy and the journey being both at an end, Brinbo^c went to enquire for Baron T—, in order to communicate to him the affair of honour in which he was engaged, and to solicit his attendance ; but he found that his Swiss friend was still in the Isle of Wight, and the time of his return uncertain. He then wished that O'Rourke or Sir James M'Corcodale had

had been in London, but as his wishes could not transport the one from Ireland, and the other from Scotland, time enough for the intended meeting, he was fain to proceed forthwith to M. de S. Didier's lodgings, whom he found in a very greasy dishabille, busily employed about some sketches for the decorations of the next new Opera. As soon as he opened his business to the noble scene-painter, the latter began to stammer and hesitate, and manifest signs of uneasiness, and after throwing down two or three brushes, and as many pots of paint, he commenced an awkward apology, which ended in declining the proposed office of second. "What!" exclaimed Brinboc, "are all your professions of friendship and attachment come to this? I have informed you of the necessity which urges me to make this request, and though you cannot now.

now march with grace or dignity at the head of your company, I think you might march with me to the place of combat, if you are not the first soldier who ever refused a call of this sort."

"Nay," returned the Gascon, "be not so violent; it is true that I have renounced all my military pursuits, as I told you before, but I would resume them again for the sake of a friend, were there not a much more formidable obstacle in the way at present.—Mrs. Griskin,—can't you guess?" "Not for my life and soul," answered Brinboc, "I cannot guess what Mrs. Griskin has to do in this affair. I do not want Mrs. Griskin to dress my dinner, which is the only occupation I could possibly find out for her."

"Fye, fye!" resumed S. Didier, "when you are better acquainted with that amiable creature, you will think otherwise;

wife ; but unfortunately Mrs. Grifkin happens to be what they call a Methodist in this country, a sort of animal, of which we have no notion in France, because we are not apt to be methodical in any thing ; now I have heard her assert a hundred times, that it is contrary to the inspiration of the new light, ever to combat, except with Satan, and that all carnal weapons of a warlike nature, are the works of darkness ; so that by only acting as an auxiliary in this business, I should send my whole scheme of matrimonial happiness to the devil at one blow.” “ Very well, Sir,” replied Brinboc, putting on his hat, “ I see how it is, but your futile excuses shall not exempt you from the punishment which I think you deserve, for your selfish behaviour. I will go directly to the Orange Coffee-house in the Hay-Market, and there, in the presence of all

all the Opera-dancers and singers assembled over their barley-coffee, and aniseed-brandy, I will make known, that your real name is Cesar Plastrog-nac, of the Plastrognacs of Blaye, in Gascony, and that you go by the assumed name of S. Didier, because you conceive that your patronymick appellation would be disgraced, by your associating with such a rabble ; and after this denunciation to the operatical convention, I would not be in your skin for all the money you will ever make by scene painting."

This menace, which, as the reader will easily imagine, had nothing serious in it, except the contempt with which it was delivered, produced a wonderful effect upon M. de S. Didier; a ghastly pale-ness overspread his lengthened visage, he shook again with fear and dismay, and he only retained presence of mind enough

enough to run to the door, and prevent Brinboc's departure. Here the terrified Cesar remained for some time, without powers of utterance, until he summoned resolution sufficient to entreat Brinboc not to expose him to ruin, and not to dis-honour his family, a petition which he enforced by the most suppliant gestures, and looks of dejection, reminding our hero also of their early acquaintance and former intimacy.

To these supplications Brinboc seemed to pay very little attention, as he had taken up a pencil, with which he was improving or rather effacing some of the painter's sketches, when the latter suddenly quitted his post at the door, and slapping his forehead, cried out, "I have it, my dear friend, a lucky thought has just struck me, do you know our countryman the *Vicomte de Lapipée?*" "No," answered Brinboc,
"That

"That does not signify," returned S. Didier, "he is the man for your purpose, as brave a fellow as ever lived, my most particular friend, and I will introduce you to him immediately."

Brinboc did not relish the proposal very much, but as he saw that he had no other alternative, he agreed to the proposition, and S. Didier, in consequence, began to make preparations for dressing, as he called it, which consisted of stuffing his hair with powder, and putting on a long military surtout. Before he had quite accoutred himself, however, a coarse female voice summoning him to dinner, was heard from the bottom of the stairs, to which the Gascon returned for answer, that he would not dine at home, for that he was engaged to dine with a *Mylor*.

"Pray," said Brinboc, "may I ask the name of the noble Lord who is to be

be favoured with your company to dinner."

"I will dine with you," replied the other briskly; "you are the son of Baron Brinboc, and I do not see why you should not be styled *Mylor*, as well as any English nobleman; besides," continued he, "it is always right to give oneself an appearance of importance, even with Methodists; *le ton imposant* is of great use to us on many occasions."

After Brinboc had laughed heartily at the ease with which this genius translated titles of honour, and the facility with which he invited himself to dine with his friends, they both sallied forth in quest of M. de Lapipée, whom they found at his lodgings, in one of the streets leading from Leicester Square.

The Viscount was a genteel looking man, of about forty years of age, of pleasing

pleasing manners and address, who no sooner heard of the motives of this visit, than he agreed with becoming cordiality to perform the service which was required of him by his friend M. de S. Didier.

The history of the quarrel, drew forth from him some severe strictures on the character of the people with whom they were living, until he was stopped in his progress by Brinboc, who said that a single instance of incivility should never prejudice his mind so far, as to obliterate from thence the recollection of the kindness and attention which he had uniformly experienced, since his arrival in England, with this sole exception.

M. de Lapipée expressed a great respect for the judgment and impartiality of *M. le Chevalier*, and added, that no doubt the character of the English nation, like that of all others, was made up of virtues

and vices : he also asked Brinboc if he was provided with duelling pistols ? and upon the latter's answering in the negative, and likewise remarking that he had forgotten to ascertain if those were the weapons to be employed in the combat, *M. le Vicomte* promised to have his own prepared in the morning, and by way of precaution to bring at the same time a Toledo, which he observed, with a smile, had been tried and found good on several occasions.—Here they were interrupted by S. Didier, who begged leave to remind them, that the hour of dining could be at no great distance, and they adjourned immediately to the Prince of Wales's coffee-house, in Lisle-street, where they spent the rest of the afternoon with great hilarity, for which they were not a little indebted to the sprightly fallies of the Gascon, whose spirits always rose in regular proportion to the number of

of dishes on the table. When the bill was brought in, Brinboc insisted upon defraying the expence of the repast, a proposition which met with but feeble opposition from the Viscount, and none at all from the self-invited S. Didier.— It was then determined that M. de Lapipée should call the next morning at six o'clock, in a hackney coach, with his portable arsenal, at Brinboc's lodgings, from whence they would proceed to the appointed place of meeting, and this point settled, the noble scene painter boldly foretold success to his friend, inasmuch as he was engaged in a just cause. To this induction, our hero knew very well, that he might have answered in the language of the schools, *Nego consequentiam*; but as the matter was not worth an argument, he took his leave, and went home to settle some private affairs.

As soon as his back was turned, the Viscount desired S. Didier to give him some particulars about his friend, and the Gascon being a man who dealt largely in a figure of rhetoric called amplification, from the circumstance of having been born under the sign Sagittarius, and being consequently much addicted to draw the long bow, he launched into a most exaggerated statement of Brinboc's fortune in France, great part of which, he hinted, was still preserved to him ; from thence he went on to describe his connections in England, as existing solely among dukes and knights of the garter ; and he concluded his harangue, by expressing his thorough conviction that Brinboc's situation, though very easy at present, would soon be improved to something great and magnificent, either by marriage with an heiress, or some other unforeseen stroke

stroke of fortune. Not a particle of this discourse was lost upon the attentive Lapipée, who thanked S. Didier for introducing him to so desirable an acquaintance, and they parted, both highly satisfied with the conclusion of their day's adventures, though each had different reasons for the pleasures which he experienced.

In the mean while, Brinboc returned to his lodgings, where he found the trusty Fulgence impatiently waiting for his arrival, and whom he surprized not a little, by desiring him to have coffee ready at five the next morning, which was earlier by five hours than his usual time of breakfasting.—He then made some testamentary dispositions, like a man who was resolved to be prepared against the worst ; and he next wrote two letters one for Madame de Rosenfelt, and the other to Eugenie; both of

which were replete with sentiments appropriate to the occasion, but on whose contents we shall forbear to touch, for this reason, that they were never forwarded to those persons, for whom they were intended, had it been the fate of the writer to fall in single combat.

CHAP. L.

JUST as the clock struck six, M. de Lapipée made his appearance, and Brinboc, after complimenting him upon his ~~cup of coffee~~, ^{his} ~~wine~~ ^{valise} performed so awkwardly, that the beverage destined for the Viscount's mouth, was poured into one of his boots, and while Brinboc was apologizing for his servant's want of care, he observed that the latter betrayed evident marks of strong agitation. The fact was, that the circumstance of a visit at so unusual an hour, combined with the warlike symptoms of the pistols and rapier, left no doubt upon Fulgence's mind about what was going to take place, and embolden-

ed by anxiety for his master's safety, this faithful domestic entreated, in the most earnest though submissive manner, that he might be allowed to follow him to the field. There being no very cogent reason why his petition should not be granted, *Fulgence was permitted to*
~~Brinboc and the vicomte~~ ^{awayed} Corner, where they had not waited many minutes, when they were joined by the other combatant, his second, and a medical gentleman. From thence the two carriages drove to a retired part of Wimbledon common, where the ground was measured, pistols loaded, and lots cast for the first fire, which fortune decided in favour of Brinboc's antagonist. He accordingly availed himself of his privilege, to which the former made no other return, than that of firing his pistol in the air.—A more temperate adver-

adversary would have been satisfied with this mark of moderation ; but as moderation was not the politician's favourite virtue, he aimed again at Brinboc, with no better success than before, while the latter discharging his pistol in the same direction that he had done the first time, brought down an unfortunate sparrow, which happened to be winging its flight over their heads at that unlucky moment. This was the only blood spilt upon the occasion, for the seconds now interfered and put an end to the combat, by declaring that all had been done which the most punctiliose ideas of honour could exact, and some civil things were said to our hero, on the dignified composure with which he stood to be shot at ; after which, the parties returned to their respective homes, to the great satisfaction of honest Fulgence, whose present joy was equal to his former grief and anxiety.

The Viscount de Lapipée, whose attentions to Brinboc were redoubled in consequence of S. Didier's favourable report, insisted upon his dining with him in return for his entertainment, and in the evening he introduced him to a party of French ladies and gentlemen, where they spent their time very agreeably.

These meetings were often repeated, and Brinboc, pleased with the open manners and cheerful disposition of Lapipée, began to think that every thing was for the best, since the Gascon's ridiculous fears of offending the elegant and moral Mrs. Griskin had been the cause of his becoming acquainted with a man, who not only proved to be a desirable companion himself, but who also procured him a cheap amusement, which served to fill up the idle hours that would otherwise have hung heavy on his hands, during the absence of Sir James

James M'Corcodale. Whether this system of optimism was well founded or not, the reader will be able to judge hereafter. It happened one day, towards the close of summer, that *M. le Vicomte* proposed to introduce Brinboc to two female relations of his own, who were lately returned from the country, and who would be very happy to see *M. le Cheva'ier*. The latter agreed without hesitation to this proposal, and they found the ladies rather out of spirits, complaining of the heat of the weather and of the *ennui* which they experienced in consequence of being left alone by their husbands, who had taken it into their heads to go to Vauxhall without them. Lapipée suggested that it would be a good joke in them to go there also, and surprise their truant spouses; and the ladies not deeming it any impropriety to put themselves under the protection of

their kinsman, retired for a few minutes to make some additions to their dress, after which they all four got into a coach, and proceeded to the gardens. Here they had not been long, before they were joined by the Benedictines, and two or three other gentlemen, the former of whom professed to be very agreeably surprised by the unexpected appearance of the ladies and their conductors. After they had walked about for a couple of hours, symptoms both of fatigue and hunger began to manifest themselves in the party, and M. de Lapipée observed, with a laugh, that as the extravagant prices of a Vauxhall supper did not exactly square with the moderate finances of emigrants, he would take the liberty of inviting them to his lodgings, provided they could put up with such fare as might be procured at that late hour. To so polite and well-timed

timed an offer no objection could possibly be made, and they returned to the Viscount's apartments, from whence a messenger was immediately dispatched to a neighbouring coffee-house to get cold meat, salad, and the materials for making punch; for as to wine, the giver of the feast declared, that it was against all the rules of economy to indulge in such an expensive article, a sentiment that was highly approved of, at least in words, by the rest of the assembly.

As soon as the repast was laid out, the company sat down, and soon proved, by their unwearied exertions, that the air of Vauxhall was an excellent sharpner of appetite, and in default of the stores of Champagne and Burgundy, which they all declared they had left their cellars filled with in France, they swallowed copious potations of punch, which served to

MEMOIRS OF

to raise their spirits. Indeed, Comus and his merry train seemed to preside at this nocturnal feast, and to inspire the partakers of it with uncommon gaiety : one of them sung several songs, or *Chansons à boire* of his own composition, which if they did not possess much musical merit, were of the true Bacchanalian sort ; another was remarkable for telling stories with a great deal of point and humour, and a third entertained the hearers with an account of the exploits which he performed, when he was an officer in the American war. In short, jest succeeded to jest, and repartees followed each other with astonishing rapidity ; and as the ladies took a distinguished part in these fallies, which were more remarkable for ingenuity of allusion, than for refinement or delicacy of sentiment, Brinboc easily perceived that he had fallen in with what would have

have been termed, in his own country, a *partie canaille*: but though he had enough of the Alcibiades in his composition, to be able to accomodate himself to any society for a short time, still he took care not to make any return to the forward advances of the younger and handsomer of the two princesses, who clearly evinced, by her behaviour, that she had not chosen the immaculate Lucretia for the model of her conduct.

At last one of the company started up, and affecting to be surprised at the lateness of the hour, begged permission to retire, as he was under the necessity of setting off, at five o'clock in the morning, for Southampton, to bid adieu to some friends who were about to sail on an expedition for the coast of France, which, considering the sagacious heads by whom it was planned, would, no doubt, be success.

M. de

M. de Lapipée argued for some time against this threatened desertion, founding his opposition on the principle, that society in general holds together like an arch, of which if any part give way, the rest is sure to follow ; and he proposed, as a frolic, that instead of running the risk of breaking up such an agreeable and convivial meeting, they should all keep together until it was time for the Southampton gentleman to take his departure.

This motion was carried by general acclamation, though Brinboc would willingly have given it his negative, in order to get away from the party, of which he was now beginning to be heartily tired ; but as he foresaw that his secession would be powerfully objected to, he silently acquiesced with the desires of the majority. The ladies, however, observed, that they could not be expected to fit up drinking

all night, and they asked their host if he had any objection to a game of cards, as the best manner of spending the rest of the time; to which request Lapipée answered, that he would be happy to procure them this amusement, provided there were any cards in the house, a circumstance which he was rather in-
doubt, not being much of a who was probably a provident lad, soon produced two new packs, which proof of diligence was rewarded by the praises of all present, one of whom promised to make him his groom-porter, as soon as he was restored to his estates in Normandy.

— This folly was the forerunner of numberless others, and ere long the card-table was enlivened by as many witticisms and as much laughter, as the supper-table had been before in the preceding part of the entertainment.

We

We cannot exactly specify the game that was played, nor the stakes which were laid down; but our documents inform us, that after the stock of punch was expended, M. de Lapipée presented his guests with a flask of *Martinique liqueur*, which he vouched to be the genuine production of *Madame Linfou's* celebrated manufactory, and that of this delicious beverage ~~Rijphoe~~

Concerning the events which really took place at the *Vicomte's*, subsequently the distribution of his Circean cup, we cannot speak with certainty, as we had not the honour of being personally acquainted with any of the company, except the hero of these memoirs, and his worthy host, whose deposition we shall have occasion to give hereafter; and as for the former, his senses were so completely overpowered, that he was only

only restored to his recollection after a lapse of several hours, when he found himself, to his great astonishment, in his own bed, supported in the arms of Fulgence, and endeavouring, with the most excruciating pains, to relieve his stomach from the remains of the deleterious potions, with which it had been charged the preceding evening.

CHAP. LI.

AMIDST the pangs of a raging headache, Brinboc desired his servant to tell him when and in what manner he had been brought home in so deplorable a situation.

~~He~~ told him that he was conveyed home in a hackney-coach, about three in the morning, under the care of a gentleman whom he had never seen before, and who departed, as soon as he had delivered up the senseless load with which he was entrusted, and that it was not without the greatest difficulty that he had succeeded in stripping his master and putting him to bed, for that he seemed rather to be in a lethargy, than in a fit of intoxication.

From

From the evidence of this narrative, combined with several circumstances which had escaped his particular attention during the jovial festivity of the last night's entertainment, but which now appeared to him in a very suspicious point of view, he concluded that the whole affair favoured pretty strongly of a predetermined trick, which could have no other object than that of ridding him of his loose cash. He then examined his pockets, and their impoverished state convinced him that his surmises were not ill founded, though he could not help admiring at the same time the sharpness of the sportsmen, who had taken so much trouble to hunt down so little game, for he had gone to Vaux-hall with only four or five guineas in his purse.

The arrival, however, of one of the gentlemen, soon enabled him to correct this

this error of calculation, and to make him appreciate his losses, by a very different kind of ratio ; for this excellent boon-companion presented him with a promissory note, by which he had bound himself to pay the bearer the sum of 347l. for value received.

Erinboc at first, either believed, or endeavoured to persuade himself, that this contrivance was merely a joke, set on foot by Lapipée, or perhaps by the ladies, to continue as it were, the merriment of the preceding evening ; but the other, whom he recollects to be the facetious story-teller, assured him with great seriousness, that there was no joke at all in the matter, and that he expected to receive the money, every farthing of which, he would have paid without a moment's hesitation, had fortune been as much against him, as she had chanced to operate in his favour.

Although our hero could not so easily perceive how fortune had operated against him, as he could understand the kind of sarcasm that was couched under these words, yet he only replied by telling M. Malavita, (for by that name his visitor had been announced,) that he must decline paying, at least for the present, a debt which he did not remember ever to have incurred, and that he must also disavow the obligation of a promise which, if really his deed, was obtained from him under circumstances that rendered it completely null and void.

M. Malavita did not pretend to make any set off against this demurrer, but putting the bond into his pocket, he left the house, muttering something about want of honour and bad faith, words, which luckily for himself, were overheard by no one, except Fulgence, who was a good watch, but no repeater.

In the course of a couple of hours, M. de Lapipée called upon Brinboc, and as the latter had discovered without any great effort of penetration, that the whole transaction was neither more nor less than a preconcerted plan to swindle him out of a sum of money, he received the *Vicomte* rather coolly, who on his part did not seem in the least disconcerted by this tacit rebuke ; on the contrary, he condoled with Brinboc on his run of ill luck, as he termed it, and assured him that he was very sorry it should have happened in his house, "but," continued Lapipée, "you seemed last night to be possessed by the demon of play ; I endeavoured several times to stop you in your unfortunate career, but instead of following my friendly advice, you only treated my remonstrances with contempt, and you even made use of some expressions so harsh,

harsh, that I was obliged to desist in my own defence: I cannot conceive either, how you managed to be so overtaken with liquor, as every body else retired perfectly sober."

This last declaration, was rather a slip for a man of M. de Lapiée's experience; but Brinboc did not think it worth his while to advert to the *lapsus linguae*, and he only asked the *Vicomte* if he really thought that he was obliged to pay the promissory note? "Unquestionably," answered Lapiée, "it is a debt of honour, and we can all bear witness that you lost the money fairly: M. Malavita is a man of unblemished character, but then he is a Corsican, and like many of his countrymen, when once irritated, rather indifferent as to the means he may employ, to obtain satisfaction: he may probably, in the first instance, make this affair public,

to the great disparagement of your reputation, and then perhaps seek for legal redress, a blow that you will not be able to parry, as the note is passed for value received, which is the usual formulary practised on such occasions."

"But suppose," replied Brinboc, "that I should not be master of the money demanded by M. Malavita, or indeed of quarter the sum, what is to be done in that case ?

"I confess," returned Lapipée, with the utmost composure, "that I do not see the difficulty ; your connexions in London, are of the very best kind ; the *Mylords Anglois*, are extremely generous, and I do not imagine that there is one of them who would not be happy to advance you such a trifle as 347l. payable within a certain time after you are restored to your property in France."

The excessive impudence of this proposal

posal had nearly exhausted Brinboc's remaining stock of patience, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he could bring himself to refrain from kicking the *Vicomte* down stairs ; however, he mastered his choler sufficiently to restrict himself to words alone, and he now, without any ceremony, revealed his mind to M. de Lapipée, that is, he told him that he and his associates were a pack of rascals, who wanted to pick his pocket, and that he would see them all at the d—, and himself in a prison, before he would become the dupe of such an infamous conspiracy.

The *Vicomte* perceiving that nothing was to be had by fair means, wanted to try what he might effect by threats and menaces, and to this end began to bluster and make a noise ; but Brinboc soon put a stop to his impertinence, by pointing to the window, and assuring him,

that if he did not instantly decamp, he should be sent out of the house in a manner more expeditious than agreeable to his feelings. This hint was not thrown away upon Lapipée, who immediately made his escape as pale as death, and foaming with rage ; and happening to meet with Fulgence on the stairs, he desired him to tell his master, that he should feel the weight of the laws, since he was insensible to the dictates of honour ; so true is it, that the most sacred words are oftenest found in the mouths of the greatest villains.

Brinboc now felt his head-ach and general indisposition so much increased by his altercation with this scoundrel, that he was obliged to get into bed again, from whence he did not rise, until the following morning ; and we will leave him to his meditations on the wiles of sharpers, and the folly of those
who

who allow themselves to be entrapped by their impostures ; while we will endeavour to fill up the hiatus with a short account of the author of his present misfortune.

This was not S. Didier, *alias* Plastrég-nac, as he had falsely surmised, for though the Gascon had been the means of making him acquainted with Lapiée, the real projector and principal actor in the plot to plunder Brinboc, yet was he entirely ignorant of the former's iniquitous designs, for he was considered by the whole party as one too silly and loquacious, to be intrusted with any secrets of importance.

To M. de Lapiée then, who had assumed the title of *Vicomte* to which he had as good a right as to that of Grand Lama of Thibet, must be ascribed the entire honour of this noble effort of imagination and thirst for arduous en-

terprise. He was the son of a tipstaff, who dwelt near the Palais Royal, at Paris, and whether he was born a rogue, or only fired to emulation by the recital of the exploits which he daily heard from his father, in the moments of leisure stolen from his professional duties; certain it is, that at the age of fifteen, he committed a crime, which would have confined him to the gallies for life, had not the judges, in compassion towards his youth, commuted the punishment to two years' imprisonment in the house of correction, from whence he came out a more finished villain than he was before. He soon after commenced Knight of the Post, and it would be an endless labour to recapitulate the various adventures in which he was engaged for a series of years, and which procured him the acquaintance of almost every gaoler in France,

France, until he was committed to the Bastille for a forgery on the *Caisse d'escompte*, and he only obtained his freedom on the 14th of July, 1789. In gratitude to his liberators, M. de Lapipée became one of their most strenuous partizans, and was in the high road to honours and preferment, when his unfortunate bias to confound the distinctions of *meum et tuum*, involved him in a disagreeable piece of business, to extricate himself from which, no other resource remained, but to fly the country.

As soon as he got safe upon foreign territory, he created himself a *Vicomte*, decorated his breast with a red ribband, railed at democrats and demagogues, and pretended to have lost about fifty thousand livres a year by the revolution.

This kind of language, and the airs of importance which he assumed, en-

abled him to impose on credulous and unthinking people; and he performed many brilliant strokes of legerdemain, at Spa, Aix-la-Chapelle, Coblenz, and several other places, without any greater inconvenience to himself, than being at times obliged to make a precipitate retreat from those places and persons, whom he had honoured with his company.

Happening to be at Frankfort during the Emperor's coronation, M. de Lapée met with a singular adventure, for he played his part with such unequalled perfection, that he actually deceived some gentlemen of the same profession, who took him to be the character he personated, and they formed a scheme to lay him under contribution, so that he was caught in his own trap, and stripped in one night, of the fruits of many months' laborious industry.

This

This check chagrined our adventurer not a little, and determined him to look out for a country where he would be least likely to catch a Tartar a second time, in consequence of which resolution, he steered his course towards England. Here, by dint of assurance, and by often repeating the names of people of consequence, to whom he had never spoken, except at the gaming table, the only place where the doctrine of equality is properly understood ; M. de Lapipée contrived, first to insinuate himself into the good opinion of some Emigrants of distinction, who were not sufficiently on their guard against his impostures, and secondly to be introduced to persons in official situations, as a man who might be of great use in carrying on a correspondence with the malcontents in the western provinces of France.

The better to abuse the credulity of his employers, he absolutely forged letters from several of the Chouan chiefs, which letters he made answer the purpose of so many bills of exchange, drawn in his favour, and the emoluments that he picked up in this new branch of business, amply indemnified him for the loss he had sustained at Frankfort, as the reader will easily conceive, when he is told that M. de Lapipée had once the modesty to rate his travelling expences from Portsmouth to London, *on public service*, at 250l.

This was carrying the joke a little too far, and the War Office refused to audit his account, which made him act with more circumspection for the future. But there are events which will force conviction, even upon minds the least disposed to receive it, and it was discovered at last, that all Lapipée's mighty promises

promises ended in nothing, and he was told that his services were no longer requisite. Perfectly satisfied with the easy manner in which he got out of this scrape, but unwilling or unable to continue idle, he soon resumed his former avocation, and became the chief of a party of sharpers, mostly composed of foreigners, who held their nocturnal assemblies in the vicinity of Leicester square.

About this time, he became acquainted with Brinboc, in the way that we have already related, and being deceived in his turn by the exaggerated account which he received from S. Didier, concerning the former's fortune and connexions, he immediately marked him out as a proper subject for spoliation.

But the main difficulty, was to determine on the place which should be made the scene of sacrifice : for Lapiée, who

was gifted by nature with all the penetration which his calling required, quickly perceived that Brinboc had no itch for gaming, and that to conduct him to a common gambling house, would be only to expose his own character, without deriving any advantage from the disclosure; he therefore summoned a meeting of his privy council, to deliberate on the most suitable means for carrying his project into execution.

In this Pandemonium, every thing was discussed with becoming gravity, and the result of their several opinions, was afterwards put in practice by the expedition to Vauxhall, the supper, the libations of punch, the innocent game at cards, and to secure all, *Madame Enfou's Crème de Noyaux* was made the vehicle of a soporific potion, which effectually benumbed the senses of the unfortunate Brinboc, and in this

this state of insensibility rather than of inebriation, his hand was made to sign the bond for a debt which he never contracted.

From this faithful narrative, the reader will be able to judge that S. Didier had nothing to do with the plans of the swindlers, but he may also learn, that the company of fools is almost as much productive of mischief as that of knaves ; for if the illustrious scene-painter had not appertained to the former numerous class of citizens, he would never have allowed his early friend and school-fellow to be obliged to recur to a man, with whose character he was totally unacquainted, and that out of ridiculous submission to the whims of an absurd woman.

CHAP. LII.

BRINBOC was now too well apprised of the sort of people with whom he had to deal, not to foresee that they would try every method of distressing him, and in order to defeat their endeavours as much as lay in his power, and to comply at the same time with the dictates of his own conscience, he sent Fulgence to discharge some small bills which he owed to Sir James M'Corcodale's tradesmen.

Fulgence returned with their receipts in his pocket, but brought back nothing else, for he had expended every shilling in the payment of his master's debts; and then Brinboc recollected that he had still a demand upon him for the rent of his lodgings, to satisfy which, there

there was no alternative left, but to pawn the few articles of value which he had brought with him from France, besides a miniature portrait of Mad. de Rosenfelt set in brilliants, that he had received from her fair hands, when about to depart from Berlin. To relinquish this pledge of affection, was a severe trial, but as love is always ingenuous in suggesting expedients of every kind, he separated the truly precious part of the article, from that which the vulgar would consider as more valuable, reserving the former for his chief comfort under his present misfortunes, and sending the latter to the pawn-brokers ; that is to say, he kept the picture, and disposed of the jewels which once surrounded it, considering very justly, that the copy, like the original, did not require the aid or splendour of adventitious ornaments, to render it inestimable.

What

What hurried on Brinboc to the performance of these sacrifices, was a note sent him by M. Malavita, in which the insolent Corsican offered to compromise the matter for 200l. paid down immediately, and threatening in the event of a refusal to have recourse to the severest measures which the laws would authorise. Brinboc treated this proposal with the contempt it deserved, and prepared himself for the worst that might happen. His situation was pretty nearly similar to that in which the poet makes his hero exclaim :

“ Now, thank Heaven, I am not worth a ducat !”

Sentiments that sound very harmoniously in heroics, but which lose all their beauty the moment they are to be experienced without figure or metaphor ; and to complete the whole, Brinboc received that same day a letter from Mad. de Rosenfelt, announcing to him the arrival of Eugenie at Berlin, and expressing

sing their joint hopes that they might be able to meet him in London, in the course of a fortnight.

"Gracious heaven" exclaimed Brinboc, "to meet me in a prison, whither I have been conducted by my own folly and imprudence." This reflection made the pill seem a thousand times more bitter than it would otherwise have been; he struck his forehead in an agony of rage and vexation, and cursed his imbecility for not flying from Lapipée's, when the conduct of the company first roused his suspicions. In this whirlwind of passion and remorse, it is not surprising that his resolution should fail him for a moment, and he actually took up the pen to inform Sir James McCordale of what had befallen him, when a mingled emotion of pride and shame, made him cast it down again, and tear the sheet of paper to pieces; after which he

felt as much relieved, as if he had vented his indignation on the fatal instrument that was the voucher of his indiscretion.

Early the next morning, a man of a very shabby appearance desired to speak to Brinboc, and upon being admitted, said that his name was Manasse Reuben, and that he had a demand on *M. le Chevalier* for 347l. which he would have no objection to touch immediately. “Mr. Manasse Reuben,” answered our hero, “I perceive plainly enough what is your object, and to avoid all unnecessary waste of breath, I tell you at once, that I neither will or can pay the note of hand, which I presume to be the cause of this visit.”

“Yesh Shir,” replied the Israelite, “I have got your pond, and ash I took it yeshterday in payment for a debt, I hope that you will not tefraud a poor man of his tue.”

“I have

"I have made up my mind," said Brinboc, "and I do not think that any thing that you can say, will induce me to alter my resolution."

"Vont you make a little pargain," resumed Manasse, "vat dey call a compromishe?"

"No," returned Brinboc, "I will make no bargain or compromise."

"Den Shir," said the Jew, "if you will not pay me my monish, you must come with me to de lock-up-house; for I am a poor man, and can't afford to loshe my monish; here officers to your tuty."

Upon this summons, a bailiff, who till then had kept in the back ground, stepped forward and arrested Brinboc, with the usual formalities, to the utter astonishment of Fulgence, whose imperfect knowledge of English did not allow him to comprehend the nature of the business;

business ; and when to his anxious inquiries, his master replied in French, *on me mène en prison,** this faithful domestic skipped about the room like a maniac, and vented part of his indignation in a volley of *sacre bœu*, and other ejaculations of the same species, until Brinboc, with great serenity of manner, desired him to moderate his transports, and to pack up the trunks, &c. preparatory to their removal.

While performing this office, Fulgence trembled in every joint, as if he had been affected with St. Vitus's dance, and when all was ready, the obdurate creditor leading the van, the melancholy debtor, and his more melancholy valet in the centre, and the stern satellite of Justice bringing up the rear, marched down stairs in solemn procession, and

They are taking me to prison.

got

got into a hackney coach which waited for them at the door.

Nor were the tears of female sensibility wanting to render the scene more interesting ; for the cause of this sudden departure being speedily made known throughout the house, the decent matron who let the lodgings, and her two virgin daughters stood in the passage, and wept to see so nice a gentleman carried into captivity by a nasty Jew, and a not less nasty Gentile. An eminent metaphysician however, whom curiosity had drawn down from his elevated habitation in the garret, did not catch the sympathetic flame ; on the contrary, he chid the women for their foolish marks of compassion, and said that they ought rather to rejoice, since the foreigner had not run away without paying his rent.

During the journey to the place of confinement,

confinement, not a word escaped from any of the party, except Mr. Manasse Reuben, who once observed that, "*he was always very shorry to put shentlemen to trouble, and dat he was always ready to listen to any ting like accommodation;*" but as Brinboc did not hear the hint, or did not choose to take any notice of it, the reign of silence commenced again, and was only interrupted, when he was delivered up to the custody of the turnkey, who helped Fulgence to carry his master's baggage to a room so dark, and apparently so damp, that Brinboc inquired if he might not be accommodated with a better apartment? "Certainly," answered the giant of this enchanted castle, and who seemed to be a civil sort of being for one of his profession, "certainly, Sir, I have got a room empty now, which I will venture to say, is as pleasant a lodging, as any

any in all London ; it is at the very top of the building, enjoys most excellent air, and commands such an extensive prospect, that no later ago than yesterday, I counted from the window, five steeples, and forty stacks of chimnies; but then Sir, these extraordinary accommodations must be paid for ; you understand me Sir."—"O yes," replied the captive, "I understand you perfectly ; pray what may be the price of this apartment of which you give so ravishing a description ?"

" Ten shillings a week," returned Cerberus, " I never took less upon my honour ; it has only been empty since last Tuesday, when the gentleman who occupied it last, was removed from hence to Newgate."

Here Brinboc said that he would consider the matter over, and the gaoler retiring, he commenced a strict examination

nation of the state of his finances, which did not take up much time, as he found that all the specie in his possession amounted exactly to fourteen shillings and sixpence, current coin of the kingdom of England, besides a piece of Louis XII. and a medal of Charlemagne.

Fulgence had partly understood the import of the dialogue which we have just related, and to which this display of his master's cash served as an excellent commentary ; he therefore guessed matters to be as they really were, and although the most respectful and submissive of attendants, his feelings got the better of every other consideration, he pulled out from his breeches' pocket the finger of an old glove sewed up like a rouleau, which he held in one hand, and placing the other upon his heart, with down-cast eyes he addressed Brinboc in the following words :—“ This bit

of leather, Sir, contains six louis d'or; they were all that I could bring away when we left Fontenaye-aux-Roses; they have escaped the storms of the revolution, the attacks of robbers, and the dangers of the seas; in your service they were earned, and to your service they should return, could I but hope that my dear master would condescend to accept of so trifling a sum, until he draws upon his banker*."

As this contribution was truly voluntary, and not made to cover any assessed taxes, the person to whom it was offered accepted it without hesitation, and as he extended his arm to receive the loan, he gently pressed the hand that tendered it. So unusual an act of

All critics who have not spent at least twelve calendar months in France, are hereby informed that no Frenchman ever parts with six louis at a time, without indulging in a little eloquence on the occasion.

condescension and mark of attachment on the part of Brinboc, thrilled poor Fulgence from head to foot ; he felt an emotion much more powerful and much more delectable, than any ever yet produced by Doctor Galvani, and though he had pronounced such an excellent exordium to his solid proof of disinterested fidelity, he was now too much confused to follow it up with an adequate peroration ; and he therefore contented himself with conveying his master's moveables to the apartment which had been the subject of the gaoler's splendid eulogies, as soon as the bargain for its hire had been agreed upon between the parties concerned.

CHAP. LIII.

IT is very strange, and also very true, that men endowed with the best understandings, and the most exquisite sense of propriety, sometimes demean themselves in certain peculiar situations, in a manner that is not to be accounted for, on general rules of conduct, or by the common springs of action. The Chevalier de Brinboc is confined to a jail, without having perpetrated any crime, except indiscretion be considered as such, and to procure the necessaries of life beyond bread and water, and the shelter of bare walls, he finds himself master of six pounds fourteen shillings and six pence, a sum that must be expended in less than two months, in spite of all

the ingenious contrivances that parsimony, enforced by necessity, ever suggested to the mind of man in similar circumstances; and yet, as if desirous to clench the nail of adversity with his own hand, he not only refrains from communicating his misfortune to Sir James M'Corcodale, who alone * could have extricated him from his difficulties, but likewise in order more effectually to shut the door against all chance of relief, he prohibits his faithful domestic from revealing the cause or place of his seclusion to any earthly being, under the pain of his highest displeasure, and with threats of instant dismissal in case of disobedience.

For the satisfaction however of those who may be astonished at this mode of

* The reader will be pleased to recollect, that Madame de Rosenfelt might now be supposed to have quitted Berlin, on her way to England.

proceeding, we can assure them, that Fulgence was not less puzzled with the nature and severity of the interdiction, but as he had the fullest reliance on his master's wisdom and sagacity, he did not attempt to fathom the depth of his mysterious injunctions, but endeavoured to serve him in a more essential manner.

To this end he hired himself as waiter to a French cook (*restorateur*) near Soho-Square, upon the following terms :

He was to receive no wages, except the pence that might fall to his share, from the liberality of the customers ; but he was to be allowed a garret to sleep in, and the permission of taking away, every day, an ample portion of cold victuals, and as it was impossible for any one to know Fulgence without conceiving a liking for him, he soon ingratiated himself so completely into the favour of the president of the culinary department,

that this great officer permitted him to carry off each afternoon, when the hurry of business was over, not the scraps and offals of a hundred plates, but three or four good slices of meat cut off from different joints, with a suitable accompaniment of vegetables, to which he added a loaf, and a pint of porter from the public house, and with this wholesome antidote against flatulence in the stomach, he used to proceed every evening to the prison, where the victuals were reheated in a saucepan, provided for the purpose, a clean napkin spread on the table, and the dinner laid out in due order, after which, he took his post behind Brinboc's chair, with as much gravity as if he had been officiating in the presence of all the *noblesse* of the province of Brittany.—While his master was eating, Fulgence always endeavoured to enliven the repast, by relating the little

little anecdotes and news that he had been able to pick up among the gentlemen who frequented the cook's shop ; and when the former had finished his meal, he regaled himself on the remnants, nor was it without the greatest difficulty that he could be induced to take his repast in the same room, the only one Brinboc had for the ten shillings a-week.

But Fulgence was a Frenchman, and feeling like a Frenchman, he conceived that to be debarred the use of coffee was to undergo one of the greatest privations incidental to human nature, and he tortured his brain for several days in order to find out some expedient by which he might procure for his master that delicious beverage. At last, chance stepped in to the assistance of his invention, and presented him with an opportunity of obtaining the article of luxury which he so much wished for.

Just at this period, it was ordained by the fates that Madame Godiveau (his employer's wife) should lose her hair-dresser by some unforeseen accident or other, and as *Madame* could not think of sitting at the bar of the coffee-room, without her usual elegant attire, she was relating her misfortune to her husband, when Fulgence, happening to be within hearing, offered to supply the deficiency, and he acquitted himself so well in this employment, which was not new to him, that Madam Godiveau asked him what remuneration he expected for his trouble? Fulgence answered, that the pleasure of being useful to so fair a lady, was in itself reward sufficient for any exertion in her service, but that if she insisted on paying him for so agreeable an occupation, he would only request to be allowed a cup of coffee every day, as the surest cure for a head-ache, to which he was subject in consequence of

being denied the use of that salutary liquor.

This polite speech, such as no waiter in Europe could have made, except Fulgence, was attended with the desired effect, and he had now the satisfaction of presenting his master with a luxury which he considered as of the first magnitude, because he set the greatest importance on it himself, and thus did the high-minded prisoner suffer his wants to be relieved by a menial attendant, at the time that he seemed determined to cope alone with adverse fortune, rather than be obliged to any one for assistance in his calamitous situation.

It ought not to be forgotten, however, that a debt of six louis d'or and the value of a daily meal, is more easily cancelled, than one of 347l., and this is perhaps the most solid apology which we can offer for the apparent contradiction in

Brinboc's line of conduct: but should our solution of the difficulty not appear satisfactory to the inquisitive reader, he had then better apply to the metaphysician of the next alley or stable-yard, who, as in duty bound, will expound this and every other riddle, with equal modesty and penetration.

CHAP. LIV.

NOTWITHSTANDING Fulgence's indefatigable exertions to render his master's confinement as easy as possible, time seemed to speed its way very lazily to the latter, when happening one morning to stroll along the corridors of the prison, he could not help stopping at the door of a room which chanced to be open, so much was he struck with the neatness and comfortable appearance of the apartment, and above all, with one part of the furniture, which was a book-case that covered an entire side of the wall, and which seemed to contain from two to three hundred volumes.

If he felt disposed to envy the possessor of such a treasure, he was not less sur-

prized to behold it in so unusual a place, and not wishing to incur the suspicion of impertinent curiosity, he was turning round to continue his walk, when a respectable, elderly looking gentleman met him suddenly face to face in the passage, and told him that he was the inhabitant of the room which seemed to have excited his attention, and that he was perfectly welcome to come in and examine its contents more at his leisure.

Brinboc conceiving that this proposal meant nothing more than an indirect censure for the liberty which he had taken in standing before the door, endeavoured to apologize for his behaviour, but the old gentleman repeated his invitation in such plain terms, as clearly evinced that he was no dealer in inuendos, and our hero acceded to his offer without further hesitation.

Nothing

Nothing dissolves quicker the reserve of new acquaintance than companionship in adversity, and the two captives soon felt as free from restraint with each other, as if they had been intimate for a long time, and after discoursing upon a variety of subjects until Mr. Pleddel's (for that was the senior's name) dinner hour approached, the latter requested that Brinboc would take tea with him that same evening.

These visits were often repeated, though only in Mr. Pleddel's apartment, because he said that he had made it a rule never to set foot in any other room in the house: which singularity, with two or three more equally innocent, formed the shady part of his character, while probity, good-humour, and benevolence filled up the rest of the portrait.

Mr. Pleddel, as the earlier riser of the two, went regularly every morning

ing to Brinboc's door, and without going in, asked him through the key-hole, how he had passed the night : and Brinboc as regularly returned the compliment every evening, but in a more sociable way, by spending a couple of hours at least with Mr. Pleddel.

The former, though really curious to learn by what chain of accidents a man apparently so worthy of enjoying all the blessings of life, should be thus immured in a prison, still carefully avoided to betray any symptoms of curiosity, for fear of disobliging his new acquaintance ; but the old gentleman, who now began to express strong feelings of esteem for our hero, indulged him in his wishes at the moment he least expected it, from the casual circumstance of their happening to talk about a splendid victory recently obtained by an English fleet over that of the enemy..

" Admi-

"Admiral ———," said Mr. Pleddel, "who has thus added fresh laurels to his fame, was once my shipmate and inferior officer: he is shortly to be created a peer, and to be honoured with other marks of royal and national munificence, while I am destined to eke out the remainder of my existence in the same manner in which it has been consumed for the last five-and-twenty years."

— "What," exclaimed Brinboc, "have you been buried alive in this place, five-and twenty years?" — "Yes, sir," answered Pleddel, "and to continue your metaphor, I am so far from desiring a resurrection, that I do not think I would exchange my present situation for all the honours and emoluments which are likely to be showered on my more fortunate messmate, and as I know him to be a brave fellow, I sincerely hope that his days may glide away as cheerfully in the paths

paths of glory, as mine do in the most secluded recess of human obscurity.— After what you have heard, you will readily guess that my story is not long, for when the years of infancy and those of my confinement are deducted from the sum total of life, the residue may be compressed into a very small comp' . —My first attempt at free agency was an act of disobedience to the will of my parents, whose only son I was, and whom I grievously offended, by running away to sea, just at the time when they meant to send me to college, there to be educated for the church, a state which their religious sentiments made them consider as greatly superior to every other.

“ I had not been long engaged in the maritime profession, before I discovered that its duties, and even its relaxations were by no means congenial to the natural bent of my disposition, but I thought

thought it a point of honour not to abandon that of which I had once professed myself enamoured, and I continued to serve in the royal navy with the real reluctance, if not with the apparent dissatisfaction of a galley slave. There was another motive also, which contributed powerfully to make me persevere in the walk that I had struck out for myself, and that was the insuperable aversion which I felt to any thing like making a choice of another profession : to have sat down in perfect idleness, would have been then the summit of my ambition, but I was aware that neither the frowns of parental displeasure, or the sarcasms of a meddling world would allow me to enjoy an undisturbed state of tranquillity, and I toiled on in the same dull round of alternate activity and indolence, heedless of the past, and not daring to look towards the future.

" At

"At length, at the close of a war, and of fifteen years' service, I found that I was still a lieutenant, without the most distant prospect of promotion, for I had not either the ability or the good luck to form any friendship or connexion which might have procured me advancement of rank, and whenever I applied to my father for his assistance or the exertion of his interest, I was sure to receive a chilling answer, allusive to my former disregard of his wishes, until his demise freed me from those constant, though useless reproaches, and put me in possession of a small patrimonial estate. Immediately upon this event, I locked up my uniform, my charts, my books, instruments of navigation, and in short, every article appertaining to the profession of a seaman, with the firm resolution never to employ them again, unless at the express desire of my country, and

as this command was never yet signified to me, I have not been tempted to break through my first resolution.

“ Being totally unacquainted with the theory and practice of agriculture, I let out my land to a farmer, and dedicated all my time to the prosecution of those studies which my abrupt departure from school had left imperfect ; and in this state of literary indolence, I consumed the happiest portion of my life.

“ Some of my neighbours, who had either marriageable sisters or daughters, very kindly, and not unfrequently threw out hints of the felicity attendant on wedlock, accompanied with remarks on the cheerless situation of an old bachelor ; but I did not pay much attention to their good natured solicitude for my welfare, until happening to dine one day with a family party at Bridport, which was but two miles from my usual place

place of residence, I was so struck with the charms and modest deportment of a beautiful young girl, the daughter of a merchant of that town, that I felt all the weight of their arguments rush upon me in a torrent of conviction, and I immediately proffered my amorous suit, and I obtained the consent of the lovely damsel and that of her parents, without any difficulty.

“ Previous to the celebration of the wedding, my future father-in-law took care to inform me that I was not to expect any portion or settlement with his daughter, but though my own fortune was not ample, I received this intimation with the greatest indifference, and I assured him, that in the possession of my beauteous bride, unprovided with any dowry but that which nature had so lavishly bestowed upon her, I should consider myself as far more rich, than

the

the lord of all the treasures of both the Indies.

" But Sir, (continued Mr. Pleddel,) would you believe it ? I was not allowed even the comforts of an ordinary honeymoon ; for there is no planet in the whole system of the universe, the velocity of whose motion can be compared to the rapidity with which I was hurled from my dreams of connubial bliss, to the sad experience of the most opposite wretchedness. In the delirium of passion, I had fancied that I was wedded to an angel, and without the influence of this mental intoxication, I might have supposed that I was the husband of a lovely woman, but I soon discovered that I was united to an infernal fury, the violence of whose passions were to be not only the scourge of my life, but also the probable cause of my death, as her irritable temper and unparalleled

paralleled folly, were constantly involving me in broils, sometimes with the servants, and sometimes with strangers, and it was impossible to foretel the issue of those quarrels, of which I was uniformly obliged to bear the brunt, although as foreign to my ideas and to my interests, as the religious disputes of the sixteenth century.

“Nor was this perpetual state of warfare the only misfortune which I had now to encounter, they were indeed many, and widely diversified, though all springing from the same fruitful source. My wife anticipated with rapture the time when she should become a mother, and for fear of being taken by surprise, she laid in such a stock of baby linen, as might have furnished the Foundling Hospital or Asylum for lying-in women; *sed spem fecellit eventus,* and because she was disappointed in her wishes,

wishes, she took a most rooted hatred to a country life, which she said did not agree with her constitution, and dragged me away from my rural retreat, which in my peaceful moments I had compared to Horace's Sabine farm, without remembering that Horace had taken care never to be inveigled into matrimony.

“ We hired a house in a dirty street at Bridport, which, had it been a paradise in other respects, would have proved extremely disagreeable to me, from the simple circumstance of its being a seaport town; so much was I disgusted with any thing connected with my former mode of life, although its most stormy seasons are Halcyon days, when compared to the tremendous gales of matrimonial tempests.

“ My house soon became the resort of an idle gossiping set, both of men and women,

women, who came to pay their respects to my wife, and her four unmarried sisters; for these amiable young ladies, by means of what they called visits, contrived to live ten months in the year at my expence, and when I flattered myself that their several marriages would rid ~~me~~ from such unnecessary incumbrances, I found to my sorrow, that I had only exchanged one tax for another; as Mrs. Pleddel always insisted upon the indispensable duty of making them a handsome present, previous to the wedding; such as a piece of plate to Miss Ann, an entire stock of house-linen to Miss Georgina, a necklace and ear-rings to Miss Kitty, and the complete furniture of a drawing-room, to Miss Lindamira. To meet these extraordinary demands, I was obliged to have recourse to extraordinary expedients, among the earliest and easiest of which, was

was that of turning out the honest man who had farmed and husbanded my lands, to let them at a rack-rent to a greedy speculator. But my wife, who had now given up all hopes of being blessed with progeny, and who had lost great part of her daily amusements, by the removal of her sisters, turned her thoughts or rather her caprices, another way, for I believe she never thought, and she plunged headlong into every kind of dissipation which a provincial town could afford. Not content with giving balls and parties at her own house, she sought incessantly for those diversions abroad, and has often put me to the blush, by descending to a thousand acts of meanness, in order to insure an invitation to what she called a gay thing, but which always appeared to me a very stupid one, and as if this circle of absurdity was not sufficiently wide, I was

obliged to attend her regularly twice a year to the assize balls at Dorchester, where in return for the trouble, the expense and the vexation, which those excursions never failed to procure me, I had the supreme satisfaction of hearing on our first appearance, a general whisper of, "there is the beautiful Mrs. Pleddel, and her good natured husband," and the glory of being involved in half-a-dozen quarrels, on account of her disputes about precedence, and other objects equally important.

"Notwithstanding the easiness of my disposition, which may perhaps deserve a less lenient appellation, and in spite of my unwillingness to see the fatal consequences of my wife's extravagance, it was impossible to shut my eyes any longer to the dreadful gulph that was rapidly opening its jaws to devour us; and emboldened one day by an unusual semblance

semblance of serenity on her countenance, I ventured to disclose to her the real state of our affairs, and to conjure her to listen to the voice of reason and prudence, before destruction became inevitable. Instead of the hurricane of rage and anger which I thought this prelude would have excited, Mrs. Pleddel preserved a most delightful degree of equanimity on the occasion, and after musing some time very calmly, she suggested, as the best expedient in our present distresses, that I should part with my only remaining consolation, by selling my library. I was incensed at this proposal, which was as puerile and nugatory in itself, as it was grating to my feelings, and for once in my life I ventured to be in a passion.

“ My wife, who no doubt conceived this extraordinary phenomenon to be an encroachment upon her rights, im-

mediately prepared to repel the aggression with becoming spirit, the consequence of which was, that our united voices produced a duet, that would have drowned the clangour of a score of trumpets, and as many kettle-drums, but finding that I was her superior in strength of lungs at least, like an able general, she changed her order of battle, and after an ineffectual attempt at fainting, burst into a flood of tears.

“ This was the signal of my total overthrow : I had read, though I cannot recollect where, but probably in the work of some author who was only a bachelor of arts, that the tears of grief, are drops of blood doubly distilled, and when I beheld the briny shower coursing down the roseate cheeks, and bounding from the heaving bosom of my beloved, I fancied that I was neither more or less than her remorseless assassin ; I fell at

at her feet, and whi'e I kissed them, asked if she could forgive me ?

" She feebly articulated my pardon, but observed at the same time, that I must promise never to touch again upon the hateful subject, which had been the cause of her distress : I swore to obey her injunctions, and I complied with my vow most religiously.

" It is not difficult to guess the rest, our expences seemed to increase in the inverse ratio of our means to support them ; my creditors became clamorous, and as soon as one set the example, they all rushed in like birds of prey upon their quarry, and endeavoured to save themselves from a total loss, by parcelling out the remainder of my property. When the bailiffs first entered the house, my wife received them with a grand salute, in her happiest manner, but finding that these gentlemen were

rather less complaisant than her husband, and not to be diverted from their business, by all the tropes and figures of the most consummate female orator, she fell into a swoon, and I availed myself of the opportunity, to slip out at a back door, and to make the best of my way to London, there to solicit the protection of an old friend and schoolfellow who was secretary to the Post Office, and as a last resource, to beg that he would procure me an employment in the Packet-boat service.

“ My creditors misinterpreting the cause of my flight, fancied that I was going to retire to the continent, after having secreted some part of my property, and in order to prevent this imaginary act of fraud, they sent instructions to have me arrested, and last month completed the twenty-fifth year of my confinement in this prison.

“ During

" During the first twelvemonth of my residence within these walls, I had much to suffer indeed, both from the recollection of better days, and from the extreme penury with which I was forced to struggle, since my sole dependence was on the miserable halfpay of a lieutenant, and even of this scanty allowance, I parted with an equal share for the sustenance of my unfortunate wife, who had been refused an asylum by all her relations, on account of her insupportable disposition.

" She did not long survive, however, the ruin of which she had been the cause, for her mind was too weak to enable her to support the storms of adversity ; she was shunned by friends and strangers, and in the hour of despondency she had recourse to strong liquors in default of all other consolation, and this fatal remedy soon put a period to her misera-

ble existence.—Such, sir," continued Pleddel, "is the true history of my life, with no part of which, perhaps, are you so much surprized, as with the appearance of comfort which I now seem to enjoy, especially when I tell you, that I never have had a farthing of income beyond what I have just mentioned. But the smallest savings, when continued for a long time, amount to something considerable, and the fruits of my economy during the fourth part of a century, have gradually enabled me to indulge in all those gratifications for which I still feel any taste, insomuch that I have not a wish left unsatisfied. Far from desiring to quit my present habitation, I should deem it the greatest of misfortunes were I obliged to cross the threshhold of my prison, and to launch out once more into a world which I have almost forgotten, and where I do not

not suppose that I am remembered by any one.

" In the early part of my naval career, I was taken prisoner by a frigate of your nation, and carried into Toulon, and as it was not then the fashion to wage war like the barbarians of Tripoli and Algiers, we were allowed to ramble about the country, upon our parole, and another officer and myself, in one of those excursions, went as far as the *Grande Chartreuse*, near Grenoble.— I have learned from the newspapers, that the philosophical revolution in your country has destroyed this silent retreat, where contemplation was never disturbed but by the offices of hospitality towards the wanderer and the stranger, and I can assure you that, though educated in a religious system which does not countenance such institutions, I experienced considerable chagrin when I

heard of their unprovoked, and, I believe, unmerited suppression. My mind recoils with horror from the distressing picture of a set of harmless individuals plunged, all at once, into the troubles and toils of a world, with whose ways they could be but little acquainted ; and, when I reflect on their unexpected disasters, and my own comparative tranquillity, I feel inclined to exclaim, with the moral, though not always entertaining, Young,

Here on a plank thrown safe on shore,
I hear the tumult of the distant throng,
Like that of seas remote or dying storms,
And meditate on scenes more silent still, &c.

“ In short, sir, by the help of a little imagination, I sometimes metamorphose myself into a Carthusian, this prison into a monastery, and the jailor into a venerable abbot, under whose gentle rule I lead a very peaceful and contented

tented life. I do not say any thing about the rest of the brotherhood, becaus' I hold very little communication with them, and because I fear that it would not be easy to carry on the companion much farther.

‘ But these flights of fancy do not conſume my sole amusement, which, besides reading, is sometimes extended to writing, and, if you please, I will shew you a specimen of my lucubration .’

Mr. Pleddel got up, and, drawing aside a curtain which hid several shelves placed in a recess of the wall, he produced a ponderous manuscript volume, which he laid on the table, and then continued his discourse.

“ This child of my leisure and seclusion is a poem in seventy-two cantos, for which I have not yet thought of a name, but which, should it ever meet

the light, will probably astonish the critics quite as much as the celebrated Septuagint of Alexandria, though it bears no other resemblance to that famous work, than the casual numeration of its books to the number of persons employed in the version of the scriptures already alluded to, and an opinion that the latter, as well as the former, was written in a prison. My poem is at once narrative and critical, heroic and didactic; the subjects which it embraces are nearly innumerable, and least the ear should be tired, in so long a work, by the constant recurrence of similar sounds, I have been careful to compose the cantos alternately in rhyme and blank verse. You will, perhaps, object to me, that such a composition is not exactly conformable to the precepts of Aristotle, Horace, and others; but while I plead guilty to the charge,
I do

I do not feel much apprehension from the consequences that may ensue from such a confession. I know, or rather I knew some grave scholars, of profound investigation and solemn deportment, who coincided perfectly with my opinion, that the ancients are the bane of the moderns ; that they hang upon us like a dead weight, and clog all our exertions ; and that, instead of considering ourselves as being indebted to them for their labours, we ought more properly to lament that a single page of theirs ever escaped the united ravages of time and barbarism. We suffer ourselves to be struck with awe at the names of Homer, Virgil, Cicero, Plutarch, &c. like children who are alarmed by the words Rawhead and Bloodybones, and the effect of this puerile respect is, that we dare not walk boldly and manfully in

in the paths which unfettered genius would point out to us.

" My plan has been of a very different nature from that of most modern writers, not omitting those who have obtained the greatest success : whenever an idea presented itself to my mind, in the course of this work, my first care was to examine the source from whence it sprung, and if I discovered that it was not indigenous (to use the word) but merely transplanted, as it were, from some other brain, then I uniformly rejected it, and thought no more of employing such a foreign acquisition than I should venture to offer a *drachma* or an *obolus* to one of our shopkeepers, in exchange for his commodities. Thus you will perceive that I am consistent in practice as well as theory, and whatever may be the beauties or deformities of my

my work, of this I can assure you, that it contains nothing but what is marked with the stamp of originality."

Mr. Pleddel's profession of faith in poetical matters astonished Brinboc not a little, but then it had the good effect of preparing his mind for every thing that might result from so unbounded a taste for originality ; and having begged to borrow the manuscript, he went upstairs to his own chamber, bending under the load of the old gentleman's septuagesimal (in round numbers) performance.

As soon as he had leisure to turn over the leaves of this extraordinary production, he found it to be precisely what he expected, that is to say, a farra-go of the most heterogenous and unconnected subjects, thrown together without

out order or adaptation, as free from the rules of Aristotle and Horace, as from those of taste and common sense, and expressed in several thousands of lines equally flat, insipid, and prosaic, excepting about twenty or thirty, which, with a little indulgence, might have contended for the name of poetry. From this examination Brinboc concluded, that the winged steed of Parnassus was the hobbyhorse on which poor Mr. Pled-del most commonly took his aerial excursions, and as he would not, for the world, have disturbed him in the enjoyment of so innocent an amusement, he abstained from all criticism on the poem, and returned it with many assurances of never having seen any thing more completely original, reflecting at the same within his own breast, on the fortunate texture of a mind, the tranquillity

quillity of which was not to be destroyed by the persecutions of Hymen, the frowns of the muses, or the horrors of imprisonment.

CHAP. LV.

THE diversified amusement which Brinbock received from the conversation and writings of Mr. Pleddel, was by no means sufficient to drive from his mind the gloomy thoughts that continually assailed his imagination, as often as he reflected on his own misfortunes, or the little chance of their speedy termination, and, above all, on the distress they would occasion to those whose exemption from affliction would have proved a source of comfort to himself under the severest trials. It is not presuming much to suppose that Brinbock would have experienced the keenest delight in meeting once more with Eugenie and Madame de Rosenfelt, and yet the strict injunctions

tions which he had laid on Fulgence not to disclose the place of his seclusion, operated as powerfully to exclude them as the most indifferent persons, from his presence; at a time when there was every reason to suppose that they might be already arrived in London.

The only visitor that had broken in upon Brinboc's privacy was Mr. Manasse Reuben, who came to try if the air of a prison had reduced his spirit so far as to dispose him to hearken to what the Israelite termed a *pargain*, or *compromishe*; but Manasse could not have chosen a more unfortunate moment for making his friendly proposal, as it happened to be precisely the morning on which Brinboc had changed his last guinea, in order to satisfy the jailor's demand for rent, who was not in the habit of granting long credit, and therefore it is needless to say that the applic-

application proved entirely unsuccessful.

Such was the inauspicious posture of our hero's affairs at the period we are now speaking of, and from which we must draw the reader's attention for a short time, in order to notice the arrival in England of Eugenie and of Madame de Rosencelt. They had fully expected that they would have met with Brinboc immediately upon their landing, but being disappointed in their expectation, they concluded that he had not received the account of their departure from Berlin sufficiently early to enable him to perform this act of attention, and, impatient of delay, they came on to London, and drove to the hotel which had been recommended to them by the innkeeper at Yarmouth. Here their first thought was to send a message, announcing their arrival, to Sir James

M'Cor-

M'Corcodale's, according to Brinboc's directions, but their surprize was very great when they received for answer that he had not been seen there for several weeks, and that, as Sir James was still absent, the servants could give no other information concerning him than the address of his lodgings.

At the lodging-house their messenger was told, that M. de Brinboc had resided there some time before, but that he had gone from thence without mentioning the place to which he was removing ; and this report was literally true, though the family knew perfectly well that he had been carried to prison, but as his last request was, that this circumstance should not be revealed to any enquirer whatever, the good people fancied that they were only consulting his wishes, and perhaps his interest, in affecting a total ignorance of what had hap-

happened to him, and this without wounding their own consciences, inasmuch as they really were not acquainted with the precise place of his confinement.

Unfortunately, the metaphysician did not chance to be present when the enquiries were made ; for, as it was his invariable practice to act in direct opposition to the rest of mankind, most probably he would have blabbed out the whole story, and imparted the secret of Brinboc's imprisonment.

It is not easy to describe the astonishment and terror which seized Madame de Rosenfelt and Eugenie, when they learned the unsatisfactory, not to say alarming, result of their messenger's fruitless pursuit : their affrighted imaginations represented to them every thing that was dreadful ; they would have given the universe to continue their researches,

searches, but they did not know a human being on the spot who could have afforded them any assistance in their enquiries ; and the gentle Eugenie, less able to cope with misfortune than her fair friend, and perhaps fancying that she was doomed to be the victim of unceasing adversity, sunk under the pressure of this new calamity, and fell into hysterical convulsions of the most violent nature. As soon as she had recovered, in some measure, from this severe attack, Madame de Rosenfelt deeming it necessary to make an extraordinary exertion in order to support Eugenie's desponding spirits, affected an air of tranquillity that was very foreign to her heart, and suggested an idea that possibly Brinboc might have gone to Yarmouth to meet them, and that they had crossed each other on the road.

Feeble as this ray of hope may appear, they cherished it with unspeakable ardour, until the lapse of a couple of days convinced them that no consolation was to be expected from that quarter. During this period neither dared to unburden her bosom of the load of apprehension which oppressed it, for fear of augmenting the other's alarms ; they sometimes sat together for hours, without uttering a word, and without getting any relief but that which tears could afford them ; and in those moments of melancholy, bordering upon despondency, every carriage that stopped before the house, and every footstep that was heard at the door of their apartment, filled them with racking anxiety, in proportion as they fancied that it might be either the harbinger of joyful tidings, or the forerunner of sinister intelligence.

As

As a last resource, Eugenie wrote to Sir James M'Corcodale, informing him of her brother's unaccountable disappearance, of the state of wretchedness to which she and Madame de Rosenkilt were reduced, in consequence of that event, and conjuring him, by all the marks of friendship which he had manifested towards the ill-fated Brinboc, that he would point out to them the most probable means of learning the utmost extent of their misfortune, in preference to remaining in the horrible torture of endless suspense.

Sir James was thunderstruck when he read this touching epistle, and, at first, could with difficulty give credit to the evidence of his own eyes ; judging, however, that this was no time either for doubt or delay, he immediately set off for London, and, travelling day and night, performed the journey in less VOL. III. II time

time than it was known ever to have been performed before.

The Baronet knew that it would be of little avail for him to go and join his lamentations with those of the bride and sister of Brinboc; and, in order to serve them more effectually, as, indeed, likewise to assuage the poignancy of his own feelings, he commenced a most persevering search after the object of their solicitude, and not content with dispatching his servants in all directions, he went forthwith to Brinboc's lodgings, where he received an answer similar to that which had been given before to Madame de Rosenselt's messenger.

From thence he went to Baron T. who had just returned from the Isle of Wight, but who was entirely ignorant of every thing that had happened to Brinboc since their last parting, and who now

now insisted upon joining Sir James in his endeavours to discover their lost friend. They then thought of M. de S. Didier, but not being acquainted with his place of abode, they were obliged to ask for his address at the Opera-house, where they were told that the noble scene-painter, availing himself of the vacation at the theatre, had gone to Margate, in company with his future spouse, Mrs. Grifskin ; and, indeed, had he been still in town, he could not have afforded any clue towards the discovery of Brinboc, as he had not been let into the secret of his imprisonment.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that Sir James and the Baron were greatly dejected at the bad success of their enquiries, and they almost dreaded appearing before the afflicted ladies, unprovided with a single thought, or suggestion,

that could administer to their tranquillity or consolation.

Notwithstanding this painful reflection, they were about to solicit admittance, when Baron T. observed to Sir James, that he deemed it more prudent not to break in unexpectedly on Mademoiselle de Brinboc, as his presence might naturally retrace to her mind the recollection of past calamities, and that he would therefore postpone his visit until some more favourable opportunity.

Sir James acknowledged the propriety of this hint, and, after parting with the Baron, desired himself to be announced to Madame de Rosenfelt and Eugenie.

No sooner did they hear his name than they rushed to the door to meet him, and, forgetful of accustomed forms and ceremonies, they gazed in silence upon the Baronet, with a mixture

ture of terror and expectation in their looks, as if they awaited from his lips the sentence of their final doom.

Sir James, on his part, was not less embarrassed for a time; he perceived how much was expected from him, and he knew how little he had to bestow; but mastering his feelings, and assuming a certain degree of composure in his manner, he addressed Eugenie, whom he instantly distinguished by her resemblance to Brinboc, and told her, that, not being able to satisfy her enquiries concerning her brother, when he received her letter in Scotland, he had come to town with the hope of being more successful; that hitherto he had not been so fortunate as to discover the place of his residence, or retirement, which, however, could not long remain

concealed, from whatever motive that concealment might have originated ; and he concluded by entreating both the sister and the friend of Brinboc not to give way to apprehensions which, he made no doubt, it would be soon in his power entirely to remove. Here Eugenie apologized to Sir James for the disorder in which she had accosted him, and presenting, at the same time, Madame de Rosenfelt, they returned him thanks for the trouble he had taken to relieve them in their distress ; but it was easy to perceive that these amiable women were rather grateful for the concern which he displayed in their regard, than tranquillized by the arguments he had used to dispel their alarms.

Indeed, it would have been impossible for the most indifferent spectator to have beheld

beheld them with unconcern : there was an awful solemnity in their looks, their words, and their whole deportment, which, while it indicated but too plainly the melancholy emotions of their hearts, rendered them a thousand times more interesting than if they had been decked out in all the gaudy allurements of splendid but unfeeling beauty. Sir James strove, though with little success, to turn their attention from the cause of their anxiety, to other objects, and he mentioned Baron T——'s preservation, and his intention of visiting them, a circumstance which seemed to afford Eugenie as much satisfaction as her mind was perhaps capable of experiencing at that moment. He then withdrew, after urging every reason that was likely to moderate their fearful solicitude, and, after dwelling at length on the favourable interpreta-

tion to be drawn from the absence of Fulgence, which, he said, was, in itself a strong presumption that nothing unfortunate had befallen his master.

CHAP. LVI.

As Sir James was returning to his own house, he was struck with a sudden thought, that perchance Brinboc might be with Lady Belmont, who had now deserted the rural beauties of Windsor-forest, to spend the autumn in the dust, noise, and bustle of a watering place.

To Brighton, therefore, did the Baronet immediately dispatch a servant on horseback, bearing to his noble kinswoman a letter, in which he requested to know if she could give him any information concerning the strayed Chevalier. Two months were elapsed since Lady Belmont had seen, and consequently since she had thought of our hero, and it was only by the aid of the fair Celestina,

whose memory was more tenacious on such occasions, that she recollects she had ever known him, and she then scribbled an answer, notifying her total ignorance in regard to Brinboc ever since he had quitted Woodbine lodge, and desiring, at the same time, in the event of his being discovered, that he would have the goodness to say, whether he could procure some *huile antique* from Paris, as she was not quite satisfied with that furnished by her own perfumer.

The anxiety felt by Sir James during the absence of his messenger, was not much relieved by this reply, and he had recourse to every other device and expedient which his imagination could suggest, not omitting that of advertising in the newspapers, where he promised a reward of fifty guineas to any one who should bring tidings of Brinboc, whose person he took care to describe with extra-

traordinary precision. Not being more fortunate in this endeavour than he had been in the many which he had already tried, he began to despair of success, and to turn his thoughts rather to the means of assuaging the affliction of Eugenie, and of Madame de Rosenselt, than to persevere any longer in a search, the fruitless issue of which served only to involve in deeper mystery the unaccountable absence of him who was the object of it.

Sir James's frequent visits to the disconsolate strangers soon convinced him that solitude could only tend to increase their grief; and, after repeated intreaties, he persuaded them to leave the hotel, and to fix their abode with two maiden ladies, of the name of Malcom, relations of his own, whose earnest care and unceasing solicitude it became to offer to their sorrow every alleviation

which pity could inspire, or sympathy suggest.

Hopeless as their situation now appeared to be, it assumed, for a moment, something like a change, in consequence of the following incident :— Sir James was returning on foot one morning from the city, when, happening to pass through Covent Garden, he thought he spied, at some distance, the figure of Fulgence. Unmindful of any thing else, he immediately rushed through the people who were assembled, as usual, in the market, and strove to lay eyes once more on the supposed valet of Brinboc ; but the latter was already lost in the crowd, and the Baronet, rendered more eager by this new disappointment, went into every shop and stall in the garden, describing the person and country of Fulgence, in hopes of finding some one who might know him,

but

but all to no purpose ; and, in the course of his enquiries, he was greeted by the ladies who sell oranges and apples with certain animated apostrophies, which we do not deem it proper or necessary to repeat.

Notwithstanding the repulsive oratory of these unworthy daughters of Pomona, Sir James repeated his rounds in Covent Garden two or three successive mornings, in company with Baron T—, until they concluded, from their little success, that the former must have been deceived by his visual organs, and they were returning, for the last time, from the scene of their researches, when, turning round the corner of King-street, they suddenly met with the identical and much sought for Fulgence. The valet, mindful, no doubt, of his master's positive injunctions, endeavoured to avoid them, and darted across the

the street in order to gain the Piazzas, but Sir James, whose suspicions were rouzed by this strange and equivocal conduct, pursued the fugitive with the velocity of a tiger bent upon its prey, overtook him, and, grasping him by the collar, exclaimed in French “*Miserable, ou est ton maitre * ?*”

To this interrogatory Fulgence made no answer, because he was almost in a state of strangulation ; but, lifting up his hands, he signified, by gestures, that if the Baronet would please to relax his hold a little, he would satisfy his curiosity, and the condition being complied with, the unfortunate domestic said, “Indeed, sir, I do not deserve this treatment ; if I fled from you, it was only in obedience to the strict commands of my master.” “What !” returned Sir James, “is your master

“ Wretch, where is thy master ?”

living?—then I forgive the rest;—lead me to him directly.”

Fulgence, either conscientioufly or politically, seemed to hesitate whether he should attend to the Baronet’s orders; but finding that he was not to be diverted from his purpose by any plea or excuse, he bowed to the sway of the higher powers, and conducted Sir James and the Baron to the house of bondage. If their surprize was great at finding Brinboc in such a place, his was not less on perceiving that he was discovered by those whom he supposed to be entirely ignorant of his fate.—

“ Ah! Brinboc,” said Sir James, “ what have I done to merit this want of confidence? You are thrown into a prison, and you not only refuse to call upon your friend for his assistance, but even forbid that he should be made acquainted with your situation:—is this kind?”

“ Do

"Do not reproach me," replied the captive; "for I am sufficiently ashamed of my conduct, which has been but one continued scene of folly and indiscretion ever since we parted: but, dear M'Corcodale, allow me to ask you a question which I almost tremble to proffer: how are—where are Louisa and Eugenie?"

"They are in London," said Sir James; "and as well as we have any right to expect them to be, when every thing is considered."—"Thank God! that they are safe," exclaimed Brinboc; "but, after all my follies, how shall I venture to face them?" "You will face them vastly well," said Baron T—; "a court composed of a sister and a mistress would not be very formidable, even to a much greater culprit than yourself." "True," resumed Sir James, "the difficulty is not what you are to face,
but

but how you are to turn your back upon this loathsome mansion, to effect which desirable purpose it will be necessary to know how you came here.” Brinboc then gave a succinct account of his adventure at M. de Lapipée’s, and of the consequences which ensued from that evening’s indiscretion; and Sir James, in return, informed him of the anxiety that he had experienced on receiving Eugenie’s letter, and of his fruitless labours to discover our hero until chance threw Fulgence in his way, whom he also thought it but just to exculpate from any premeditated design, or wilful breach of duty, in revealing the place of his master’s confinement. It was not without reason that the Baronet had bestowed the epithet of *loathsome* on his friend’s present habitation; for the latter being no longer able to pay the rent required of those who chose to

to enjoy the prospect of steeples and chimnies, had been obliged to descend to a room on the ground floor, which was dark, damp, and dreary, only receiving air and light through a small grated window, which looked to a back yard. However unwilling Brinboc might feel towards entering into any arrangement with the person at whose suit he was detained, Sir James soon convinced him that there was no possibility of his obtaining his liberty by any other means, and it was resolved that a treaty should be immediately set on foot with Mr. Manasse Reuben, in order to learn the price at which he would consent to his prisoner's release. The Baronet likewise promised to communicate the glad tidings to Madame de Rosenfelt and Eugenie, with the necessary precautions not to overpower their feelings with such unexpectedly joyful

joyful intelligence; after which he and Baron T—— withdrew, leaving Brinboc to eke out another tedious evening in the cheerless solitude of his gloomy habitation.

CHAP. LVII.

NOTWITHSTANDING all Sir James's precautionary measures to prevent too violent transition from misery to happiness in the minds of the fair sufferers, they indulged in the most extraordinary transports when they heard that they were to be blessed once more with the sight of Brinboc, and they would have rushed forth instantly to catch him in their arms, had not the worthy Baronet assured them that they would not be admitted to see him, as nocturnal visits were prohibited by the etiquette of prisons.

This last word sounded dreadfully to Eugenie and Madame de Rosencelt; however, they were overjoyed to find Brin-

boc any where ; and Sir James pledging himself to accompany them the next morning, he left them, not to the pleasures of rest, but to those of anticipation. We are not ashamed to confess that we are inadequate to the task of delcribing the affecting interview which took place between Brinboc and his loving and beloved sister and bride: suffice it to say, that when the two latter passe' from the raptures of exquisite delight to a more collected state of mind, their joy was somewhat abated on receiving the former's altered looks. He was become very thin; his complexion, never of the most florid kind, was now of a sickly, fallow hue; and his general appearance, both haggard and emaciated, bespoke corporeal indisposition, as well as mental distress. These unfavourable symptoms, however, were entirely attributed, by all present, to the

the effects of confinement, want of exercise, and depression of spirits ; and as their cause was about to be removed, no doubt was entertained of a speedy recovery, when committed to the fostering care of the amiable Louisa and the gentle Eugenie. There was another spectator who also received very great pleasure from the proposed liberation of Brinboc, though his motives were not exactly the same ; and this was Mr. Manasse Reuben, whose eyes goggled with wonderful vivacity when he found that there was a *compromishe*, as he termed it, in the wind.

After a great many offers on the one side, and a great many knavish evasions on the other, the Israelite was induced to promise a renunciation of all claims on the prisoner's person and estate, upon receiving the sum of sixty pounds, which was, at least, three times as much as he had

had given for the bond, though he pretended to lose a great deal by this *par-gain*.

Previously to quitting the jail, Brinboc did not omit to take leave of Mr. Pleddel, who said that he should feel no small regret in thus losing his company, could he but suppose that the former was as indifferent to the charms of liberty as he was himself; and he likewise added, that, being always at home, he should be truly happy to see M. de Brinboc, whenever he might chance to pass by that way.

Fulgence, who had dreaded his master's wrath, in consequence of having been instrumental to his discovery, was now almost frantic with joy, on finding that every thing turned out so well, and, in the height of exultation at this sudden and unforeseen reverse of fortune, he thought no more of the cook's shop,

or of Madame Godiveau's neglected tresses.

While Madame de Rosenfelt and Eugenie returned to the Misses Malcom, who most sincerely congratulated them on the happy events of the day, Brinboc went with Sir James to inhabit again his old apartments in Grosvenor Square, until such time as his nuptials with the amiable widow should require a separate establishment. On their arrival there, Brinboc found a letter from O'Rourke, in which the honest Hibernian recounted how he had been induced to sacrifice a second time at the altar of Hymen, by the irresistible charms of his own third cousin, Miss Mary Moriarty, whom he had met with, blithe and blooming like one of Diana's nymphs, on the banks of Killarney, and whom he meant to introduce, ere long, to the gaieties of London, where he hoped to have the
plea-

pleasure of presenting his bride to Madame as well as M. de Brinboc.

"This matrimony," said Sir James, "has something epidemical in it ; one never hears of a couple being attacked, but another is sure to follow ; and I do not know but what I may catch the contagion myself."—Brinboc laughed at the baronet's whimsical idea ; and they then adjourned to Miss Malcolm's, to spend the rest of the day with the ladies.

CHAP. LVIII.

THERE are some men whose nature it is to doubt and hesitate upon matters of minor importance; but who determine, with the rapidity of lightning, when once they have exerted their judgment on subjects of deep interest, and real magnitude. Perhaps this particular feature, in certain minds, may be no bad indication of vigorous intellect, the truest characteristic of which is, the power of expanding or of contracting itself in proportion to the size of the object or objects it has to contemplate, since our rational faculties are solely finite in their operations, because some of those objects are too great, and others too minute for their inspection; and he therefore may be considered

sidered as approaching the nearest to perfection, whose mind has this species of flexibility, or capacity of embracing its subject-matter in the way peculiarly adapted to that matter, and which would be probably in some degree inapplicable to every other.

We do not presume to desire the reader to attach any more belief to this our theory, than just as much as he may think convenient or suitable to his own system, for nobody is so poor as not to have one; but merely to attend to the matter of fact, which is (mark the connection) that Sir James M'Corcodale having had sundry opportunities of witnessing and admiring the manifold beauties, as well mental as personal, of Mademoiselle Eugenie de Brinboc, had resolved, without doubt or hesitation (*vide supra*) to espouse the said Mademoiselle Eugenie, provided he did not find him-

self in the situation of one of his friend O'Rourke's countrymen, who, after a similar resolution, discovered that he only had his own consent to the match.

To obviate this and other difficulties, the Baronet wrote a letter to Eugenie, declaratory of his passion; a copy * of which having fallen into our hands, we here present it to the public.

To Mademoiselle de Brinboc.

" Were you, dear lady, twenty years older, or were I twenty years younger, than what we really are, it would be impossible to enter upon the subject of this letter without a long and laboured introduction. But the candour and ingenuousness of your age, combined with the maturity of mine, impresses me with the belief, that the step which I am tak-

* *Ex manuscripto penes me.*

ing,

ing, will not have the wiles and shifts of affectation to encounter on your side; at the same time, that on mine, it must escape from the imputation of juvenile rashness or inconsiderate presumption.

“ Upon these grounds, I will dare to indulge in the hope, that if you are not pleased, you will at least not be offended with a declaration of love from a man, whom you perhaps hardly yet consider in the light of a friend. Our acquaintance, I acknowledge, has been of no very long duration, yet, in that short period, I have had innumerable opportunities of remarking in you, all the qualities and endowments which can constitute the most deserving of wives, and confer happiness on the man who may be blessed with the possession of Eugenie. Full as my heart is with these sentiments, I will not venture to obtrude them on one, from whose bosom I have no right to

expect the smallest return, though my hand, my fortune, and my everlasting affection, would be the feeble means of expressing some part of my gratitude.

" With one observation more, I shall conclude this, perhaps, already too tedious epistle. The motive which, above all others, impels me to make so sudden a declaration, is the wish that it may meet your eye, before some involuntary word or gesture shall reveal a secret, which, while it is such, ought to be inviolable to every other human being. Circumstances placed me in a situation, with regard to your brother, in which it was impossible for me, not to shew him those trifling civilities, that he was entitled to as a stranger, independently of any other consideration. I know full well, that the nobleness of his mind, will lead him to rate those little attentions infinitely above their real value, and that his

his generous disposition would prompt him to repay them ten thousand-fold, were it in his power. I also know how you love him, and how you are beloved by him, even with the affection which ought to reign, and which only can exist, between such a brother and such a sister. Shall I add the rest? Forgive me, I beseech you. I shudder at the idea of your determination being influenced by any earthly being. No, fairest Eugenie, it is from you alone, that I must receive my final doom. Do not imagine, that because I have been abrupt, I wish you to be precipitate; far from it, I am willing to evince, by patient perseverance, that my professions of attachment are as solid and sincere, as they may appear sudden and unauthorized; and of this you can rest assured, that though my prospects of future peace or wretchedness, rest entirely upon your decision,

yet nothing shall ever diminish the respect and esteem of your truly devoted
“ J. M'CORCODALE.”

This letter was written immediately after the visit mentioned in our last chapter, and dispatched the following morning, from which time, until that of receiving an answer, the baronet's breast was at prey to all the torments of anxiety and suspense. These torments, however, were exchanged for sufferings of another kind, when the answer was delivered to him, not by his messenger—not by any indifferent person—but by the only man he wished to have nothing to do with the correspondence—by the Chevalier de Brinboc. “ Here,” said the latter, presenting the note, “ here are a few lines from my sister;” and turning away in a careless manner, he left the baronet to digest its contents ; which were as follows :

To

To Sir J. M'Corcodale.

“ I am not at all displeased with the subject of your letter, nor with the manner in which you address me. On the contrary, I feel flattered with what I am at liberty to interpret as a distinction in my favour. It would argue the greatest vanity in me to believe, that I, am deserving of the many civil things which you express ; but to suppose you sincere in these professions, is an act of justice, which I cannot refuse to your well known character and principles. I am not ashamed to add, that the expressions of esteem and attachment, with which you honour me, have excited similar sentiments in that bosom, from which you did not choose to expect any return. Thus far have I attended to your wishes, with the most scrupulous exactitude, for you receive your doom, as you

term it, from *me alone*. The delicate motives, which induced you to propose this condition, are my sole apology for agreeing to it ; and, for the first time in my life, I have ventured to take a step of importance, without consulting my brother. As soon as this is closed and sealed, he shall be made acquainted with its contents, and be also the bearer of it, from your's, &c.

“ EUGENIE.”

The unaffected simplicity of this answer, convinced the baronet that he had not deceived himself in the high opinion which he had formed of the fair writer's good sense and judgment ; and delighted with the prosperous appearance of his love concerns, he ran to Brinboc, who had opened a book, and seizing him by the hand, exclaimed with visible emotion ; “ Dear Brinboc, have I done wrong ?

wrong? have I been too precipitate? do you condemn my conduct?" "No, generous man," replied Brinboc, "if any thing were wanting, to make you worthy of my admiration, that deficiency would be now compensated for, in the most ample manner; and heaven is witness, that I ask for no other happiness in company with my Louisa, than that which I implore for you and Eugenie."

This was indeed a moment of high exultation to both the friends, but more particularly to Brinboc, on whom this shower of good fortune had fallen, without his having the smallest notion, or suspicion of Sir James's intentions, until they were intimated to him that morning by his sister, after she had previously formed her own determination, in the manner related by herself.

CHAP. LIX.

MADAME de Rosenfelt, as may be imagined, was no indifferent spectator of the scene of happiness which now seemed to unfold itself before her dear Eugenie, as some récompence granted by the justice of heaven, for the trials and sufferings which she had endured in the cause of virtue, and for the preservation of her innocence. But Madame de Rosenfelt's surprise was by no means equal to the satisfaction which this desirable event procured her; for the superior sagacity of female penetration in matters of this sort, had enabled her to discover, even in the midst of her affliction for the supposed loss of Brinboc, that his sister's worth and beauty had made a deep impression

pression on the baronet's heart, though she did not then suppose, that the business would be brought to so speedy a termination.

From the latter circumstance, she took occasion to rally Eugenie on the rapidity of her conquest, and likewise to say in joke, that without the order for Brinboc's banishment from Berlin, she did not think she should be half so far advanced herself.

But the cases, as she well knew, were widely different ; Sir James, without any incumbrance, and master of an ample fortune, was at liberty to attend solely to the bent of his inclinations ; while the hero of these memoirs, without any fortune, and unwilling to be an incumbrance to his sister, who was at that period still in possession of the remnant of their property, had much to revolve within his mind, before he could determine.

mine on associating any one else in the companionship of adversity. He knew that Madame de Rosencelt had been left a handsome competency by her first husband, but as no separate provision had been made for her three children, he reflected, that a considerable portion of it must devolve to them, at some future period. For the present there was no existing difficulty, as the boy was left at the military academy, under the particular care of one of his paternal uncles, and the two little girls had come over with their mother, and would become the objects of his own special attention, as soon as he should have the honour of being called their stepfather. There was one person, however, connected with this joyous group, though of an inferior order, who did not participate to the full in the general hilarity; and this was the trusty Fulgence. We mentioned

mentioned once before, that this paragon of valets had placed his affections on Mademoiselle Pauline, the waiting-maid of his master's sister, and we were also obliged to bear unwilling testimony to the inconstancy and broken faith of that perfidious Abigail. Poor Fulgence, who never dreamt of any such thing, was both astonished and afflicted, when he beheld Eugenie in London, unaccompanied by the object of his chaste amours; and he took the earliest opportunity of inquiring about his much beloved Pauline. Eugenie, as well from motives of decency, as from compassion towards the victim of ill requited love, endeavoured to soften the sad story as much as possible, for it had been transmitted to her in all its native deformity by M. de Flavigny; but she said enough to convince the unfortunate squire of his mishap, or perhaps more properly, of his lucky escape.

Although

Although Fulgence's indignation was great at this unmerited, but not unexampled act of ingratitude, yet it was easy to see, that he could not divest himself all at once, of his accustomed tenderness towards the unworthy idol of his affections ; he dropt a tear over the painful narrative of her aberrations ; and had he been a favourite of the muses, would probably have given vent to his feelings, in words something similar to those of Tibullus :

“ *Perfidu—sed quamvis perfida, cara tamen.* ”

CHAP. LX.

MADAME de Rosenfelt and Eugenie, besides their introduction to the other amusements of the British capital by the Misses Malcolm, were now initiated, by the same kind conductresses, in the art of *shopping*, as practised by ladies of the first fashion; and the occasion or pretence for this species of morning entertainment was the purchase of furniture, &c. for the house which was to be inhabited by Brinboc and his fair bride.

When the evening was not dedicated to some public place of amusement, it was spent at Miss Malcolm's, whether the gentlemen did not fail to repair, accompanied by Baron T—, or one or

two other particular friends ; and then they revelled in that greatest of human enjoyments, a lively, rational, and unconstrained conversation, the charms of which are unknown to the unhallowed vulgar of every degree, and which, like the serene sky of a summer's afternoon, please in themselves, and promise a succession of pleasures. Sir James McCordale was the better able to indulge himself and his friends in the tranquillity of this delightful intimacy, because the season was not yet set in when the loungers, the loiterers, and the various descriptions of idlers, leave the watering-places, and other places of frivolous resort, to concentrate their forces in the winter quarters of the metropolis.

As the return of this annual inundation was at no great distance, it was resolved that the double nuptials should be

be celebrated as soon as possible, in order to escape, in some measure, the tiresome congratulations of people who are always prodigal of their professions of joy or sorrow, because they cost them nothing ; but as the fairest day is often followed by the most tempestuous weather, especially in our changeable climate, so these agreeable prospects were overcast by a deep gloom, which had nearly destroyed for ever the happiness of the persons over whom it extended its influence.

We mentioned before that when Brinboc's friends had discovered him in prison, they were greatly struck with the marked alteration that had taken place in his looks, but which they flattered themselves would disappear as soon as he was restored to their care, and to the blessings attendant on liberty.

Their

Their hopes, however, were not fulfilled, by any means. Far from recovering his wonted health and strength, they both seemed to decrease every day ; and this visible decline was not confined to the powers of the body alone, but seemed also to affect the disposition of his mind. Brinboc's flow of animal spirits was never of that outrageous kind, which, after fatiguing its possessor and all those about him, recedes again in a similar proportion, and leaves him flat and dry, like the sea-shore, after an equinoctial spring-tide ; but, at the moment we are describing, our hero was sunk in spirits far below his natural level, and it was only in the presence of Madame de Rosencelt and of Eugenie that he occasionally regained his accustomed cheerfulness of manner. At last the peccant humours which were first set in

in motion during his confinement, began to manifest their ravages in a more violent way ; and, by a singular coincidence, it happened that Brinboc's distemper obliged him to take to his bed, immediately subsequent to a visit which he and Sir James paid to Mr. Pleddel, as if the air of a prison held some peculiar enmity with his constitution.

Dr. Stuffer and Dr. Starver, two eminent physicians at the west end of the town, were sent for ; and each began to prescribe, and order a kind of treatment for the sick man, according to his own favourite system ; that is to say, the former being a florid, plethoric looking gentleman, pronounced the patient's disorder to be the effect of inanition, which could only be removed by a proper course of tonics, comprehending generous wines and nutritious aliments. Dr. Starver, on

the

the contrary, insisted that all disorders were more or less to be attributed to intemperate living, and consequently recommended that the patient's body should be cleansed from the impure remains of luxurious indulgences ; after which, he said that he would undertake to ensure his recovery by means of cooling potions and a spare diet ; and he enforced this sort of doctrine, by alluding to the good health which he enjoyed himself, and which, he pretended, was the sole fruit of abstemiousness, conquering the attacks of a consumptive disposition.

Had either of these modes of treatment been adopted implicitly, it is more than probable, that our task would now be confined to writing Brinboc's epitaph ; but, fortunately for him, he was surrounded by persons who received the injunctions of the learned in physic, *cum grano*

grano faliſ, and at the end of three days, when the violence of the fever ſubſided, a yellow tinge, which covered his whole body, left no doubt this his malady was the jaundice, a disease which is ſaid to be ſometimes produced in persons of bilious habits, by the concurrent cauſes of anxiety and mental depression.

If the progress of Brinboc's disorder had been gradual, before it came to a crisis, its retreat was ſtill more dilatory; and in the protracted ſtate of debility, which accompanied his convalescence, he received no ſelace, but that which was conveyed to him by the company and converſation of his friends. Among these, Madame de Rosenfelt was of course particularly ſuccessful in chasing away the tedium of confinement; and, indeed, it would have been difficult, if not im-possible, to have found any one ſo fit for that office, even ſuppoſing that ſhe had been

been an indifferent person, only engaged by the common assiduities of friendship.

In the early part of these memoirs, we paid a just tribute to the endowments, as well personal as intellectual, of this charming woman ; and whether she had to preside in a drawing room, or to dispense comfort at the bed of sickness, her manner, her actions, and her words were marked alike with grace, elegance, and propriety. In the gentle Eugenie, she found, on the present occasion, an assistant, whom the warmth of sisterly affection had converted into a rival, in the earnestness and solicitude which they both displayed, first for the recovery, and afterwards for the entertainment of Brimboc, during the hours of languor and seclusion. These are offices, upon which men may discent at leisure, but which only women can perform with the assuaging care and delicate attention, that

that would better entitle them to the appellation of angels, than those external and fleeting charms, which sometimes procure them that name from the mouths of fools and coxcombs.

With a serene conscience and a kind female nurse, a sick room is not such a terrible place as many suppose it to be, at least to those who are accustomed to it; and yet, thrice happy they who never stood in need of such comforts and alleviations! though Professor Weppenheimius of Stuttgart is of opinion, that in order to have a true relish for the enjoyment of health, a man ought to be tormented with the pains of a racking disease, at least once a year. We have known some robust sceptics refuse to subscribe to the truth of the Professor's observations, *salva tanto viro debita reverentia.*

But to return once for all, from this abominable trick of digressing, towards which, it must be allowed, that we have a powerful bias, in spite of our unceasing efforts to repress such unruly propensities, permit us, indulgent reader, to present you with an account of the catastrophe which befel Monsieur Bernardi, the Illuminé, with whom you became acquainted during Brinboc's residence at Berlin, the same being related by Madame de Rosenfelt, at the request of the Chevalier. It seems, that this illuminated adventurer, not satisfied with the smiles of royal approbation, and undismayed by the cool return which he experienced from Brinboc, when he proposed to initiate the latter in the mysteries of the modern Cabala, had sought for proselytes among others with great success, until a stop was put to his progress

gress by the following accident. M. Bernardi had acted as master of ceremonies to a young Silesian nobleman, whom he introduced to the company and intimacy of the *illustrious dead*; and the consequence of associating with such distinguished personages, was an increase of expence, which made the Silesian draw for larger sums than his guardians thought proper to allow him. This circumstance awakened their suspicions, and after a very minute and laborious investigation, they discovered at last, that the far greater part of the money called for by the young nobleman, had gone into the pockets of M. Bernardi, who had kindly undertaken to be banker for Plato, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and the other inhabitants of the Elyfian fields, who came, by his invitation, to spend their evenings at Berlin. As the Illuminé had many friends at court, it is

probable, that the whole affair would have been hushed up, but for the wrath of the young Silesian, who, in the height of his indignation, at the gross cheat practised upon his credulity, published his adventure to all the town, swearing at the same time, that if he caught his worthy preceptor, he would send him to visit, in his turn, the shades below. This uproar forced the tribunals to take notice of the matter; and some other transactions, of a very questionable nature, being brought home to M. Bernardi, his protectors, who were also his disciples, became ashamed of their connexion with such a swindling impostor, and abandoning the unfortunate Illuminé to his fate, he was condemned to perpetual imprisonment in the castle of Spandau, with no other company than that of the jailor, and the spirits of the *illustrious dead*, who might chuse to visit him in his adversity.

CHAP. LXI.

THE sultana, in the Arabian Nights, was not more solicitous to procure entertainment for her despotic lord, than the friends of Brinboc, to charm the tedium of his confinement, by their presence and attentions.

It happened, one evening, that our hero accused Sir James M'Corcodale of being in his debt; and when the latter pleaded ignorance of the obligation, Brinboc reminded him of a promise which he had made, to favour him with some account of his life, in return for the narrative which he had given of his own.

" I am perfectly ready," answered the baronet, " to comply with my pro-

mise, which, to tell you the truth, I had completely forgotten : but, I much fear, that it will not afford you or my fair auditors any great amusement, as I was never engaged in those marvellous adventures or romantic exploits, which constitute the chief merit of individual history."

" I ask your pardon," replied Brinboc, " if I do not assent to your ideas of the chief merit of personal narrative. In my opinion, a minute relation of wonderful adventures, can only be interesting, inasmuch as it is founded in truth ; and when that is not the case, the recital of a succession of natural events, such as might occur to any man, is far from being void of entertainment, and even of instruction, provided it is communicated in the manner in which you will, no doubt, acquit yourself.

" To string together, a great number of wonderful incidents, with little connexion,

nexion, and still less felicity of arrangement, is the daily labour of many a hungry scribbler, whose productions are hardly known before they are forgotten, and which resemble those paintings, representing a motley and fantastic assemblage of animals, books, utensils, insects, musical instruments, and packs of cards, forming a whole, rather fatiguing than pleasing to the eye.

“ Events, whether real or fictitious, are the ground-work or skeleton of every narrative ; but to embody those events in their just proportions ; to connect them by strong, though imperceptible nerves and ligaments ; and finally, to produce a whole, full of life and motion, is the exclusive province of genius, whether it be employed upon subjects of diminutive size, or of colossal stature. In works, purely of imagination, the greater the fertility and variety of invention, the

greater, no doubt, is the merit of the composer; and yet, I am much inclined to question, if what we call invention, might not be termed, more properly, a close inspection of nature: the giants of Rabelais, and the Lilliputians of Swift, are certainly nothing but men—mere nature—caricatured indeed, to produce some effect on the dull organs of the million. Unfortunately, we have not M. Bernardi here to raise the spirits of the *illustrious dead*, or, I am pretty certain, that the shades of Fielding and Le Sage, would confirm my hypothesis, and assure us, with that sincerity, which is not always to be found in living authors, that the most admired portions of their works, were those in which they copied most faithfully from nature. Writers, who do not follow the same track, may surprise, and even delight, for a moment; but their success is purely ephemeral, and

and if they are blessed with a good constitution, they seldom fail to outlive their transient reputation."

Here Brinboc was interrupted by the gentle Eugenie, who congratulated him on the recovery of his strength, which enabled him to talk so much; and as he was not backward at taking a hint, the baronet was allowed to commence his narrative.

" You do not know, perhaps, ladies," said Sir James, " that in the part of the island which gave me birth, younger brothers are generally as slenderly provided for, as they were with you in the provinces of Britanny and Gascony; though this circumstance does not particularly concern myself, who am an only child; but I mention it, because my father was the youngest son of a baronet, whose title I now enjoy. My grandfather, Sir Archibald M'Corcodale, was

more than suspected, of favouring, with his wishes at least, the exiled house of Stuart ; and after the battle of Culloden, when the fortunes of that ill-fated family were irretrievably lost, he retired entirely from society, to reside on his estates in Berwickshire.

" There, in a kind of Gothic magnificence, he gave himself up to the pleasures of the field and those of the table ; and when the younger branches of his family, aware that they would become destitute on his demise, represented to him the necessity of seeking some mode of advancement in the world, he turned with disgust from their remonstrances ; because his pride revolted at the idea of their stooping to commerce ; and his principles would not allow him to suffer his sons to draw their swords in the service of the reigning monarch. But Sir Archibald was doomed to receive a severer wound

wound in this tender part, by the conduct of my father, who falling desperately in love with the daughter of one of the most zealous, though not most opulent of the adverse party, ventured to reveal his passion to the old baronet. It is not in my power to describe the indignation of the latter, when he heard this unwelcome piece of intelligence; and in the height of his anger, he poured forth the most bitter imprecations against himself, if ever he consented to so unnatural an union. My father was too well acquainted with the inflexibility of Sir Archibald's character, to attempt any further expostulation on the subject; and while he appeared to submit to the dictates of paternal authority, he availed himself of the peculiar facility, which the laws of Scotland present to clandestine marriages, and he secretly espoused the

young and beautiful object of his violent but imprudent attachment.

"It was not long before my mother's pregnancy imposed the absolute necessity of declaring the nature of her connection with my father to her own family ; and, as disagreeable tidings are seldom lost for want of a bearer, Sir Archibald was soon made acquainted with the whole story. He was then confined to his bed by the gout, and the irritation of mind produced by the account of his son's disobedience had so fatal an effect on the old gentleman's constitution, that he had barely time to make his will, when he breathed his last, without chusing to be reconciled to, or even to see my unfortunate father. Unfortunate he certainly was, as well as disobedient ; for, in addition to the cruel reflection of having accelerated, though

though unintentionally, his parent's death, he was left destitute of the small provision he might otherwise have expected ; and it was under this accumulation of gloomy circumstances that I made my entrance on the stage of life. A very slight inquiry into the state of his inheritance soon convinced the successor of Sir Archibald that he was possessed of little more than a title ; for the old Baronet's ostentatious mode of living had greatly exceeded the limits of his income, and afforded his heir ample room for exercising the virtue of œconomy. This was a fresh difficulty to my father, who had now no other resource but that of persons in his situation, namely, entering into the army ; and he left his country never to return ; for he was killed in the first action in which he was engaged with the enemy.

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"The predicament in which my mother stood, after the loss of her husband, was truly pitiable. She had forfeited the regard of her own relations by marrying against their wishes ; and she had allied herself to a family which was little able, and perhaps not very willing, to afford protection to her and her infant child. I do not remember her any more than my father ; and therefore I speak from report when I say, that she was of the most mild and gentle disposition, and consequently the less able to struggle with the trials of indigence and adversity. Her delicate constitution sunk under the pressure of this accumulated load, and I was bereft of both my parents before I was four years old.

"My uncle, Sir William, took charge of my education ; and when I was of a proper age he sent me to Westminster

school, where I remained for three years. It is not easy to reconcile this step with his subsequent conduct towards me; for, at the expiration of the term which I have mentioned, the person in London to whose care I was entrusted presented me with a letter from Sir William, desiring that I would immediately leave school, and repair to the house of a merchant in the city, to whom I was to be bound apprentice in order to learn business.

“ I was not at all prepared for so peremptory and unexpected an injunction; and as I had already travelled over the most rugged and unpleasant avenues to science, with tolerable credit to myself, and as I was also just beginning to experience that love of knowledge which seizes youthful minds anyhow calculated for its reception, I ventured to expostulate with my uncle in the most respectful

ful manner, and to request that he would allow me to go to Oxford or Cambridge, in preference to the counting-house of a merchant.

“ The answer to this humble petition purported that I was an impertinent jackanapes, who wanted to make an ungrateful return for the favours already bestowed upon me ; that I wished to imitate my grandfather in pride and extravagance ; that if I fancied I was to be my uncle’s heir, I was egregiously deceived, as he meant shortly to marry, and have a family of his own ; and I was finally ordered to chuse between an instantaneous and unqualified submission to his desires, and the certainty of being abandoned to disgrace and wretchedness.

“ Hard as the alternative then appeared to me, I was forced to embrace it ; and my removal to the merchant’s house

house being effected, I exchanged *Livy* and *Virgil* for the day-book and ledger ; and, instead of amusing myself with *Ovid's epistles*, I was fain to copy letters of business, until I became almost as stupid as they who had first indited them. Thus did I moil on for a space of time that seemed to me equal to a hundred ages, when the scene became suddenly altered, by the casual circumstance of one of the partners in our house going to form a new establishment at St. Petersburg, and I was selected to accompany him in the undertaking. This was a new æra in my life ; instead of labouring at the desk from morning till night, and being under the controul of an old avaricious curmudgeon, who thought he could never work his clerks sufficiently, my new principal, or rather my boon companion, for such he proved to be, only dedicated as many hours to busi-

business as was absolutely necessary, and then forbid that the very name of commerce should be mentioned, a regulation which I endeavoured to inforce to the utmost extent of my seconday authority.

“ This gentleman had long been noticed as one of the most dashing characters in the purlieus of the Royal Exchange ; and his taste for the elegancies of life was rather increased than diminished by his migration to the banks of the Neva. Our house was furnished in the most sumptuous manner ; the whole continent was laid under contribution to furnish our wine cellar ; and princes and ambassadors were loud in the praises of our cook, whom they declared to be the most expert palate-tickler in all the Russias.

“ Among the persons of fashion with whom I was now in habits of intimacy, was

was our own minister, Lord Frinkum, whose money-concerns we transacted, and who, in return, frequently honoured us with his presence at dinner and supper. One morning, while I was engaged in the office,* this extraordinary representative of Majesty came running in, quite out of breath, and, taking me by the hand, exclaimed, "My dear Mac, I am in the greatest distress imaginable: the secretary to the embassy is just dead. Having betted that he would drink a greater quantity of burnt brandy than General Baldrobowski, he fell a victim in the attempt, to the superior powers of this devil of a Muscovite; and what makes the matter still worse is, that I want to present a note to the Government, and not one of the other secretaries can write a word in-

* The word *counting-house* is exploded among polite merchants.

any language but English : I shall be eternally obliged to you if you can assist me in this dilemma."

" I did not hesitate a moment in tendering my services to Lord Frinkum, with the performance of which he was so well pleased, that he offered to recommend me for the situation made vacant by the decease of the unfortunate brandy drinker ; and I was too much delighted with the prospect of being completely delivered from the irksome drudgery of a commercial life, not to close immediately with his Excellency's proposal. Still I deemed it both prudent and decent to acquaint my uncle with my unexpected metamorphosis; in return for which piece of information I received a letter from him full of invectives and reproaches for my folly and ingratitude, in deviating from the line of conduct which

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He had marked out for me, and desiring, at the same time, that I would cease to entertain any hopes of his future friendship, as he was about to place his affections on a more tender and deserving object. I understood the hint perfectly well, and reconciled myself to the menaced exclusion from Sir William's fortune with great equanimity, which was, perhaps, somewhat strengthened by the hope that he would never carry it into execution. But before I proceed in this relation, it may not be improper to explain the singular whim of my uncle, in forcing me to be of a profession to which he could have no personal or hereditary attachment, since I was the first of the family who had ever been a merchant. The truth is, that Sir William, on succeeding to his father's property, found it in such an embarrassed state, that he was obliged

liged to adopt certain plans of strict œconomy, which, originating in necessity, were afterwards continued through mere force of habit ; and, in conformity to this disposition of mind, he resolved that I should follow a profession, in which my own industry might supersede the exertion of much liberality on his part. He likewise never meant that I should inherit his fortune, or title, to both of which he was too powerfully attached not to wish that they should be enjoyed by his own immediate descendants. I have been told that he paid his silent addresses to the females of the same family for three generations, without ever daring to propose the question in an explicit manner, because his desire of posterity, on the one hand, was exactly counterbalanced by his dread of expence on the other. As soon as he fancied that he had mustered

refo-

resolution enough to take a wife in good earnest, he was sure to be driven from his purpose by the irresistible temptation of an estate to be sold in the neighbourhood, or of some lucrative tontine or canal project ; and I always considered those traps for my uncle's covetousness as the best foundation for hoping that I should, one day or other, succeed to the property of my ancestors.

“ But to resume the thread of my story. I had not been many days old in my diplomatic career, when I discovered that my place was not a sinecure ; for Lord Frinkum being very properly convinced that he knew nothing at all about the matter, reposed the entire load of public business upon my shoulders, in the same manner as he had done before with my predecessor. Indeed, in proportion as I became acquainted with his Excellency’s qualities, I was

I was filled with astonishment that he should ever have been appointed to fill a situation of so much importance. He was idle, thoughtless, and dissipated ; he knew no more of the relative interests of the different governments of Europe, than of those of the petty states of ancient Greece ; and, to sum up his character, he was even egregiously deficient in that high polish of manners and captivating urbanity which is often of such essential service in the management of diplomatic concerns. With this last mentioned qualification a man of middling talents may sometimes effectually forward the interests of his country, provided he has the aid of intelligent persons about him : but without it, the most able negotiator always appears to great disadvantage ; because he is certain to suffer by unfavourable comparisons. Out of a thou-

thousand proofs which I might adduce in support of the faithfulness of my lord Frinkum's portrait, especially with regard to the prominent feature of inattention to his duty, I will select the following striking instance :

" Just as his lordship was setting out one day to join the court at Tzarsko-Celo, a courier arrived from England, by way of Hamburg, and presented him with dispatches. He did not wait to examine their contents, but, putting them into his 'pocket, he ascended the box of his barouche, and drove away in a very masterly manner ; for both nature and education had destined him rather for the situation of a coachman, than for that of a minister plenipotentiary.

" About a fortnight after, another courier arrived from London, by way of Stockholm, and, as Lord Frinkum was

still absent, I opened the dispatches, and found that they contained papers of the utmost importance, but which appeared to be duplicates of others that had been already forwarded. Not having heard any thing of the first set, I concluded that they had miscarried; and, to preclude the possibility of similar misfortune, and to prevent all further delay, I immediately threw myself into a carriage, and went post haste to Tzarsko-Celo. But judge of my astonishment, when, signifying the cause of my visit, and at the same time my apprehension lest any bad consequences should result from the loss of the former papers, his Excellency burst into a horse laugh, and said he would lay an even wager that the dispatches alluded to were those which he had received when leaving Pittsburgh, but which he had never so much as opened, and which he had

had completely forgotten in the more entertaining amusements of the Imperial court. At first I could scarcely believe that I was treating with a rational being, so much was I struck with this unparalleled display of folly and criminal neglect; and I do not exaggerate in saying, that if any previous disposition to ill-will and misunderstanding had existed between the two cabinets, the lives of thousands might have been the dear forfeit of Lord Frinkum's little forgetfulness. I cannot take leave of this extraordinary personage, without informing you of the extraordinary way in which he came to be made an ambassador, and which to you must be a legitimate subject of curiosity.

“ His lordship, imitating the laudable example of many illustrious youths, had not been five years in possession of his estates, when this ample provision be-

came unequal to the demands of his creditors, and, after running the gauntlet of bonds, mortgages, and usurers, he was forced to apply to his father-in-law, to assist him in his difficulties. This prudent gentleman recommended him to go abroad, as the best means of nursing his estate; and that he might not be quite unoccupied during his absence from home, advised him to ask for the post of ambassador. Lord Frinkum relished the proposal vastly, but expressed his fears lest he should not have interest enough to procure the situation. To obviate this difficulty Mr. —— waited immediately on the minister, and demanded the nomination of his son-in-law to the embassy to Russia, which happened to be then vacant.

“ The minister, well aware of Lord Frinkum’s utter incapacity to fill such a place, or indeed any place in which talents

talents or common sense were requisite, started some objections to the proposed appointment ; but Mr. ——, who possessed considerable parliamentary influence, besides being member himself for the county of ——, insinuating, pretty plainly, that he must withdraw his support from the minister, should he be denied so trifling a favour, the menace had its desired effect ; for the lust of power overcoming every other consideration in the minister's mind, he acceded to Mr. ——'s solicitations, and sent a fool to represent his sovereign in a foreign country.

“ I have foreborne to say any thing about Lady Frinkum, because she returned to England on the plea of bad health, just at the time that I became attached to the embassy : but the true cause of her departure from Petersburgh was the chagrin and disgust which she

conceived at the ridiculous figure made by her husband. After this you will not be surprised to hear that I also came in for a tolerable share of similar emotions, and should certainly have imitated her ladyship's example, had I been entirely master of my own actions.

"An event, however, which concerned me much more nearly, relieved me, at last, from my disagreeable situation, and operated an entire change in my affairs. This event, as you may perhaps guess, was the death of my uncle, Sir William, of which I no sooner received the news than I obtained leave of absence from that mirror of statesmen, Lord Frinkum, and embarked directly for Scotland, in order to ascertain, with precision, the baronet's testamentary dispositions.

"In a moment of extraordinary energy and resolution, my uncle had
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entered into the state of matrimony, not with a woman of his own rank in life, but with the daughter of an attorney, whom he saw one day, and whom he asked for of her father the next, to the astonishment of the whole neighbourhood. When a rich man of seventy-two marries a girl of eighteen, he is sure to be blessed with an heir, and my young aunt, as if in a hurry to testify her gratitude for the honour which she had received, presented her spouse with a fine boy in something less than seven months from the date of their nuptials.

" All was now joy and festivity at M'Corcodale hall, and what with drinking caudle and entertaining guests on the one hand, and secret vexation at the increase of expences on the other, the old gentleman did not survive his good fortune many weeks, and

by his will, he bequeathed the usufruct of his whole fortune to his wife, during the nonage of her son, and a handsome jointure for the remainder of her life.

“ Such was the account which was delivered to me, when I visited the place of my nativity ; and as there was nothing in it sufficiently flattering or consolatory, to induce me to prolong my stay, I set out for Edinburgh, where I recounted my adventures, not omitting my last disappointment, to an old school-fellow, who now ranked high on the list of advocates.”

“ Hearke, M‘Corcodale,” said Mr. Carruthers, “ for that was my friend’s name, we professional men, do not give up our claims as easily as you appear inclined to do ; we generally survey a thing of this sort in twenty different ways, before we abandon it altogether ; and though I am not one of those who see every

every thing in the worst point of view, I cannot help thinking, that there is something odd and mysterious throughout this whole business; an old man, in a state of dotage; a son and heir born in an unusually short time; and a will, drawn up by an attorney, so nearly connected with the persons advantaged by the will, form all together a rough sketch, which might be filled up with great success in a lawyer's brief. I have now some days of leisure before me, which I will dedicate entirely to your service: what say you to a trip back into Berwickshire, where we may investigate the affair a little better?"

"Had this proposal come from any other quarter, I should have supposed, that it contained nothing but a snare, to draw me into a law-suit; but, besides, that I was well assured of Carruthers's friendship and honourable principles, my

circumstances were not such, as to hold out any very tempting bait, even to the most hungry and rapacious of the whole tribe. Still, I was not sanguine in the matter, for, to speak candidly, I could not perceive the smallest likelihood of success in our endeavours ; but as there was nothing to be lost by pursuing them, I seemed to acquiesce in my friend's opinion, and we set out upon our journey of discovery.

" My companion having procured a copy of the will, fell to examining it with as much earnestness as if he had been personally interested in its contents ; but in spite of the peculiar talent, with which gentlemen of his profession are gifted, for finding out flaws and informalities in compositions of that sort, he could light upon nothing which afforded the faintest hope of its being set aside in a court of justice, thanks to the legal abilities

lities of Mr. Attorney. As for my part, I enquired into every circumstance, that had either preceded or followed my uncle's marriage; but though the whole country agreed in calling him an old fool, for what he had done, still no one would positively assert, that Sir William was in an absolute state of idiocy at the time of making his will. While we were engaged in these researches, I received a message from the baronet's relict, desiring an interview with me at M'Corcodale-hall; and if I was surprized at this invitation, I was yet more so at the manner in which she received me.

" In the whole course of my life, I never met with a more artful and designing woman than my uncle's widow; and notwithstanding her youth and little intercourse with the world, she was a perfect adept in all the wiles of dissimulation. On my first appearance, she shed

a few tears, as if my presence had revived in her memory, the tender recollection of her dear departed spouse. She then assured me, that she was greatly distressed at the harsh treatment which I had experienced from my uncle; that were it in her power solely to consult her own feelings in the case, she would gladly share with me a part of Sir William's property; and she concluded, by throwing out some very intelligible hints of a disposition on her part, to renew with the nephew, the kind of connexion, which with the uncle had procured her so much happiness.

“ I had need of all my prudence and forbearance, not to treat this shameless proposal, with the expressions of indignation which it deserved; but considering the character of the person I had to deal with, I resolved to meet her on her own ground; and returning a calm, though evasive

evasive answer, which still left a door open for further negotiation, I took my leave of this worthy follower of the celebrated Ephesian matron. The sequel of my story will prove, that I was not wrong in this determination ; for, most probably, the artful widow's intention was, that I should so commit myself, by an imprudent correspondence with her, as to leave it in her power to drive me from the country with ignominy, whenever she should think proper so to do.

“ Carruthers and myself, being persuaded of the inutility of remaining any longer in Berwickshire, we were on the point of returning to Edinburgh, when I was told that the minister of the gospel, from a neighbouring town, wanted to speak to me. He asked me, if I was nephew to the late Sir William M'Corcodale ; and, upon my answering in the affirmative, he desired to confer with me in

in private. The good man prefaced his discourse by remarking, that the ways of Providence were inscrutable, and that it sometimes raised us from the lowest abyss of dejection, to the height of worldly prosperity, which however was nothing, compared to the happiness reserved for the elect hereafter. He then told me, that the cause of his visit, was an occurrence, which would exemplify in part, the truth of the above doctrine ; and in virtue of which, I might consider myself as the only lawful heir, both to the title and estates of my deceased uncle.

" I stared, when I heard the minister talk in this manner, and I began to think that he had been set on by my enemies, either to banter me, or to inveigle me into some act of imprudence ; but the worthy pastor chided me for my impatience, which he said, was the child of levity and the parent of mischief ; and after

after this gentle rebuke, he related the circumstances, to which he had already alluded.

" He had been called, the preceding evening, to one of his parishioners, who was supposed to be passing fast to eternity; and when he attempted to offer him the spiritual comfort, usual on such occasions, he found the sick man's mind prepossessed with the strange notion, that one half of the infernal legions, were drawn up in a hollow square, ready to seize upon his soul, as soon as it should depart from his body. After some difficulty, the minister extorted from him an avowal, that the cause of this terrific idea, was the remorse which he felt, in having been accessory to a scheme of fraud and villainy; that he had been privately married, for several months, to the attorney's daughter, previous to her union with my uncle, Sir William; that

he had been induced, by promises of a handsome provision for life, not to reveal this secret; and what was of still greater importance, that he was in possession of a letter from the young woman, in which she urged him to declare their marriage, because she found that she was pregnant of the child, which she afterwards palm-ed upon the credulous baronet, as the fruits of their own wedded love.

“ This letter,” continued the minister, “ is now in my hands; and I recommend to you, not to lose time in asserting your rights, and likewise to shew your grati-tude to heaven, by applying your for-tune to good purposes, instead of con-suming it in feasting, riot, and debau-chery.”

“ I promised to follow the reverend pastor’s advice in both points, and im-mediately communicated this good news to Carruthers, who was almost as much overjoyed.

overjoyed as myself, and we returned forthwith to Edinburgh, in order to commence the necessary proceedings, for insuring the interference of justice in my behalf.

" As a detailed account of these proceedings would not afford you much amusement, suffice it to say, that my claims were admitted to their fullest extent; that the attorney's daughter was compelled to resume her humble situation in life, with the additional mortification of being hated, for the airs she had given herself during her prosperity; and that the little gentleman, who was to have elbowed me out of my title and estate, was declared to be a base-born bantling, unworthy of being engrafted on the illustrious stock of the M'Corcodales.

" To crown my good luck, I found that I was destined to reap all the fruits of my uncle's economical plans and parsimonious.

simonious disposition, which had more than trebled his paternal property, and which now put me in possession of a clear income of ten thousand a-year. This was, no doubt, a great change in my affairs; but still greater was the change which I experienced in the manners and attentions of others. The postman came loaded to the door, every morning, with letters of congratulation, from persons whom I had never seen; and as many more begged leave to be admitted to the honour of consanguinity. The very same people, who, a few months before, had passed me by unnoticed and unheeded in the crowd, now overwhelmed me with disgusting civilities, till unable to bear any longer this unceasing display of impudence, mingled with servility, I quitted the country, and sought for the more desirable lot of comparative obscurity, in the great vortex of the metropolis.

metropolis. But I had made an erroneous calculation, in supposing that even the magnitude and bustle of London could afford me a safe asylum, from the attacks of invincible assurance and persevering self-interest; and, in a short time, my porter's list exhibited such a copious catalogue of northern names, as would have induced a common observer to suppose, that I had been appointed president of the Board of Controul, or governor-general of Bengal. It is incumbent on me, however, to make an honourable exception, with regard to my cousin, Lady Belmont, whose house was ever open to me, as well in the early as in the latter part of my life, and whose civilities were neither increased nor diminished, by the sudden changes of fortune, which it was my lot to experience. This goes to prove, that certain,

tain oddities of manner, and peculiarities of character, are not incompatible with a good heart and a generous disposition.

“ As to the subsequent part of my history, I think it hardly worthy of mention, since it has been confined to a discharge of my parliamentary duties, and an indulgence in those literary pursuits, for which I have always preserved a taste, both in the hurry of business, and amidst the blandishments of pleasure and dissipation.

“ When I set out, last summer, upon a tour to the continent, I promised myself considerable satisfaction from my journey, and in that expectation, I was not disappointed: yet, I candidly confess, that I was far from foreseeing, that it would be the means of making me acquainted with persons, from whose society,

-ciety, I have already derived so much enjoyment; and, in particular, with one person, from the continuation of whose favour the whole happiness of my life must ultimately depend."

CHAP. LXII.

THE stroke of gallantry, with which the baronet concluded his narrative, occasioned a delicate suffusion on the cheeks of the gentle Eugenie, that did not escape the notice of his other hearers, and that rendered her more interesting than ever.

In the course of a few days, Brinboc's health was so much improved, as to admit of his going out; and he had been with Sir James, to pay a visit to some friends, in the neighbourhood of Hampstead, when returning through some of the worst parts of the town, the carriage was stopped by a vast concourse of people, at the corner of a narrow street, near St. Giles's. Brinboc, impatient of delay, and desirous to know the cause

cause of this detention, looked out of the window, and perceived a man, mounted on a cobler's stool, at the door of a porter-house, and haranguing the mob with most extravagant gesticulations; while the rabble, in return for his eloquence, frequently saluted him with handfuls of mud and filth from the kennel. Our hero and his friend were about to proceed, when their curiosity was farther excited, by hearing the orator vociferate the words *liberty, equality, and regeneration*; and desiring the coachman to stop, they caught a glimpse of the speaker, just as the vehemence of his action had made him lose his balance, in consequence of which, he was hurled from his rostrum to the ground with extraordinary violence.

Fearful that the unfortunate devil might have received material injury by his fall, Brinboc and Sir James immediately

dately alighted, and had him taken into the ale-house, where, in spite of the incrustation of dirt, which covered the philosopher's face, they recognized the features of their old acquaintance Halfatz. Upon enquiry, they learned from the master of the house, that this celebrated metaphysician had been his lodger for some time, and that, notwithstanding the difficulty with which he expressed himself in English, he had been considered as a very great man by some of his customers, especially by those members of the corresponding society, who were in the practice of frequenting his house. He also added, that Halfatz was in the daily habit of drinking great quantities of spirituous liquors, which he supposed had affected his intellects, as he had latterly manifested symptoms of insanity, which had induced the publican to desire his guest, that morning, to seek for a lodging

lodging elsewhere ; but that the philosopher had answered in a rage, that every thing was common property among regenerated nations, a position, which he was endeavouring to prove to the multitude, when Sir James's carriage was stopped in the street.

While the man was delivering this account, Brinboc observed, that Halfatz bled pretty copiously from the nose and head, in consequence of the contusions which he received in his fall, and he desired that a surgeon might be sent for, to dress his wounds. He then strove to make himself known to the metaphysician ; but the latter seemed to be completely out of his senses, and to have lost all recollection of both the gentlemen. When the surgeon arrived, and attempted to examine his head, he became more outrageous than ever, and probably fancying that he was in the act of storming

the Bastille, he called the ale-house keeper by the name of De Launay, and ordered, in French, that he should be hanged immediately at the lamp-post. It was now necessary for several persons to hold him down, while the surgeon was applying the proper remedies to his cuts and bruises ; in the performance of which, having occasion to take a piece of written paper out of his pocket, Hal-fatz swore that it was a *lettre de cachet*, which, however, he set at defiance, since the reign of despotism was at an end. Judging from this language, and the other circumstances already related, the surgeon pronounced his patient to be mad, and intimated the necessity of having him removed to a proper place of confinement. Sir James and Brinboc were too well convinced of the justice of this sentence, to offer it any opposition, and they saw the unfortunate philosopher carried

carried off to a mad-house ; there, in all probability, to terminate the remainder of his singular and miserable life.

When Brinboc recounted his morning adventure to Madame de Rosenfelt and his sister, they both seemed to commiserate the wretched fate of Halfatz, whose wild schemes of reform were likely to end in Bedlam, where indeed they might have been suspected of having originated.

“ Though I am likewise inclined to pity, in any individual,” said Sir James M‘Corcodale, “ so serious a calamity as the privation of reason, still I cannot help observing, that this foreign philosopher appears to have trespassed a little on the rights and privileges of my countrymen.

“ An Englishman hardly ever goes mad upon any subjects, except religion and politics. He no sooner begins t

get a twist in the head, than he falls to studying the Apocalypse with unremitting attention ; and the fruits of his lucubrations are usually, either a learned treatise, to prove that the pope is Anti-christ ; or else a polite epistle to the King, offering himself for the place of prime minister ; or, perhaps, demanding one of the princesses in marriage, out of regard to the general good of the nation. Such, commonly speaking, are the shapes in which mental derangement manifests itself in England ; though the late revolutionary mania has, I believe, extended those blessings to some other countries, where an immoderate study of the rights of man, has produced effects still more strange and distressing."

Brinboc smiled at the comparison, and mentioned a case in point, of the celebrated *Mademoiselle Theroigne de Mericour*, who, after taking a conspicuous part in
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the early stages of the French revolution, was now confined to a mad-house. He added, however, with a more serious countenance, that there were many, who had not even this excuse to allege, in extenuation of the crimes and excesses which they had committed.

This conversation, which took place at the Misses Malcoms, was interrupted, to the great surprize of all present, by the unlooked for appearance of M. de S. Didier. The illustrious scene painter had heard of Sir James's arrival in town, and being very desirous of cultivating his acquaintance, he had gone, without loss of time, to pay him his respects; but not finding him in Grosvenor-square, he followed him, without ceremony, to a house where he had never been in his life. Here the Gascon indulged in his usual volubility of speech, paid the ladies abundance of compliments, though he

had never seen them before ; and succeeded at last, by a singular mixture of impudence and originality, in procuring to the company a considerable share of amusement. Being about to withdraw, S. Didier whispered in Brinboc's ear, " My dear friend, I only heard of your misfortune, when it was too late to be of any service to you, or to give any proof of the sincerity of my attachment to my old school-fellow : but you will not be sorry to hear, that that scoundrel, Lapipée, has been sent out of the country, under the Alien Act ; a good deed, to which I am proud to say, I contributed my share; both from a sense of public justice, and as some consolation to you, who were the victim of his villainy."

Brinboc made no reply to this kind declaration ; and Sir James, on his return home, desired to be always denied to

to S. Didier; not out of any dislike to the man, but because he foresaw, that if the scene painter was once admitted into his house, there would be no end to his visits; which, however they might amuse, at great distances from each other, would be sure to tire and disgust, on frequent repetition.

CHAP. LXIII.

OUR hero's health being now completely re-established, and the house which was taken by him and his bride being quite ready for their reception, a day was appointed for the celebration of the double wedding. It had been resolved at first that no one should be present at the solemnity, except Baron T——— and the Misses Malcom, to the former of whom was assigned the office of giving away the two ladies, while the latter were to act in the capacity of bride-maids; but Mr. O'Rourke (of whom we have so often spoken before) chancing to come to town in the interim with his young wife, they also petitioned him to assist at the ceremony.

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Indeed, both Eugenie and Madame de Rosenfelt were charmed with the manners and conversation of Mrs. O'Rourke, who, besides being extremely pretty, united to the usual vivacity of her countrywomen a great deal of good sense and good humour, which made her company very desirable. In addition to these qualifications, she likewise possessed a certain degree of Hibernian accent, which, though perhaps not fully appreciated by the foreign ladies, was not thrown away upon those who have a taste for such kind of embellishments.

The reader is not to infer from hence, that Madame de Rosenfelt and Eugenie were not competent mistresses of the English language, an advantage for which they were principally indebted to the circumstance of having been educated in the convent of Eng-

lish nuns at Paris ; but then it seldom happens that the ear of a foreigner is so nicely formed as to be able to perceive a slight variation from that peculiar cadence of voice which belongs particularly to each language, to the exclusion of all others, and independently of provincial words, or idioms. To return to the candidates for Hymeneal honours, every thing appeared to favour their wishes, and the gales of prosperity seemed to have set in at last, in order to waft their barks to the shores of human felicity ; but an unforeseen accident had nearly destroyed this flattering prospect, and overwhelmed, in irremediable misfortune, the persons most deeply concerned in this scheme of happiness.

c It chanced that winter that the frost commenced rather earlier than usual, and Sir James M'Corcodale having contracted,

ed, during his residence in Russia, a great partiality for the diversion of skating, he went out one morning to indulge in his favourite amusement. Brinboc accompanied the baronet to the Serpentine River, in Hyde Park; but being no proficient in this invigorating, though often dangerous exercise, he contented himself with walking on the banks of the frozen river, and observing, with considerable pleasure, the mazy evolutions and elegant attitudes of those who glided along its slippery surface. It is probable that the skaters, in their eagerness after pleasure, had not waited till the ice was every where sufficiently strong to bear their weight; for Brinboc's attention was suddenly roused by piercing shrieks, emitted by several persons at once; and, casting his eyes to the spot from whence they came, he beheld, with horror, the friend of his

heart sinking into the watery abyss, which its brittle covering had suddenly opened under his feet.

Regardless of his own safety, and forgetful of every personal consideration, Brinboc disengaged himself in a moment from his outward apparel, and, rushing forward on the ice amongst the appalled spectators, each of whom now trembled for his own security, he arrived at the fatal spot, the verge of which he no sooner touched than the ice gave way a second time, and he was likewise precipitated into the river. Fortunately for them both, Brinboc was an excellent swimmer, and, after plunging twice ineffectually, on his third re-appearance he brought up Sir James, whom he grasped by the hair with one hand, while with the other he caught hold of a rope, thrown to him from the shore, by means of which he drew the

almost lifeless Baronet from his perilous situation.

It was some time before Sir James recovered his senses ; and when he did, the first use he made of them was to ask for Brinboc. Probably the image of the latter bounding forward to rescue him from destruction, was the last idea which had presented itself to his mind immediately previous to the suspension of his faculties, and upon their revival it still held its place in his memory, and produced this question, expressive of apprehension for the safety of his friend. Brinboc soon convinced Sir James that he had also escaped their common danger, and, after exchanging their dripping garments for dry ones, procured by some of the bye-standers, they were conveyed home in the carriage of an acquaintance, who happened to have witnessed the whole scene.

As the first news of this adventure was communicated to the ladies by the chief actors in it themselves, the former were spared the cruel anxiety which they must have experienced had it come to them by any other channel; but the recollection of Brinboc's gallant conduct made a profound impression on M'Corcodale's grateful heart, while the tears of mingled joy and sensibility, which stole down the roseate cheek of the gentle Eugenie, evinced the share the latter possessed of her affection; and, as intrepidity is one of the qualities most highly prized in men by the softer sex, perhaps Madame de Rosencelt felt an almost equal degree of satisfaction in contemplating the noble deed achieved that day by her lover. This was, indeed, true courage; but there are many renowned duellists, who, instead of acting in the same manner,
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would, in similar circumstances, have contented themselves with shouting and hallooing from the shore, or sending some one else to save a drowning man, taking very good care, at the same time, not to endanger their own precious persons.

It would now seem that Fortune, in a fit of remorse for the tricks which she had played our hero, was resolved to make him all the reparation in her power, by not only presenting him with an amiable wife, but also with the means of supporting that wife in ease and affluence, circumstances which often have a mighty share in determining whether wives, as well as husbands, shall be amiable or otherwise.

The very evening of the day on which Sir James M'Corcodale had nearly fallen a victim to his passion for skating, a letter was put into Brinboc's hands,

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the superscription of which announced it to be from Madame de Flavigny, whose friendly, not to say motherly conduct towards Eugenie, we have often had occasion to speak of in the preceding periods of this history. A letter from Madame de Flavigny was, in itself, a cause of exultation ; but when the contents of it came to be perused, they were such as could not destroy the pleasurable emotion which it had first excited. M. René-Gilbert-Florentin de Brinboc, formerly *Seigneur de Kersemerche*, and deputy to the states of Britanny, was a very distant relation of our hero's, who, in the early stages of the revolution, had greatly distinguished himself, both by opposing the measures of the court, and by forwarding, to the utmost of his power, the grand work of national regeneration. In return for these patriotic exertions, not omitting a volun-

voluntary surrender of all manerial and other feudal rights, the said *Seigneur de Kersemerche* was stripped of a considerable part of his property, thrown into prison, and condemned to die by the guillotine, from which he only escaped by a species of miracle. Disgusted at this ungrateful and unexpected treatment, he went into the opposite extreme, and became as violent an enemy to every thing connected with the revolution, as he had been before its warm admirer. Having always lived in a state of celibacy, like most of the philosophical reformers of that epoch, and finding that nature was about to perform that office for him which the terrorists meant only to have anticipated, the lord of Kersemerche sought in his mind for an heir, who might inherit the remainder of his property, and the whole of his dislike to those who had

had deprived him of the rest. He had no near relations, and he bequeathed his fortune to the hero of these memoirs, partly because he bore his name, and partly because it might be presumed that the latter was not prepossessed in favour of those events which had driven him from his native country.

Important as this bequest might appear upon paper, it would have been little better than an empty title, had it solely related to property in France, which, from Brinboc's situation as an emigrant, would not then have rendered him a bit the richer: but, luckily for him, it likewise comprehended certain estates in the island of Martinique, which island had recently surrendered to a British army. Upon inquiry among the planters from that colony who happened to be in England, it was computed that the annual produce of those estates

estates could not be less than from two to three thousand pounds. Thus was Brinboc enriched by a legacy from a quarter where he had no reason to expect any such thing, and enabled at once to marry the object of his affections, without any fear or anxiety for their future support, in a way conformable to their accustomed habits and indulgences, a reflection quite superfluous among romantic lovers, but by no means to be despised in a connection in which common sense forms any part.

It is needless to say that this fortunate windfall did not tend to retard the double nuptials; and the day appointed for their celebration being arrived, though with tardy steps, according to the ideas of the impatient brothers-in-law, the indissoluble knot was tied, in the presence of the persons whom we have

have already mentioned, besides the faithful Fulgence, who participated in the general joy, notwithstanding the painful reflections which might have occurred to his mind, in consequence of the less favourable termination of his own amour with that everlasting disgrace to the order of Abigails, the faithless Pauline. Madame de Brinboc, (as we must now call her) looked all grace and elegance, according to custom; and the gentle Eugenie (or Lady M'Corcodale) was the emblem of innocence and softness, beautifully personified. Nor did the disparity of years that existed between her and her bridegroom destroy in the least the harmony of this fine group; for though the Baronet was a good round forty, health and vigour, the effects of temperance and sobriety, were stamped upon his person and countenance; and his masculine

culine strength seemed well adapted for the guardianship of the delicate beauty confided to his care.

As to the thrice happy Brinboc, he did not laugh once during the ceremony, to the great astonishment of the parish-clerk, who expected a vast deal of giggling from so young a man; but when it was over, he cast a glance at his amiable bride, which might have improved the ideas of a painter who wished to delineate Adam's expression of countenance, when meeting our first mother, previous to their fatal transgression. Carriages were waiting at the church door to convey away the new-married couples, and they set off immediately for Woodbine Lodge, which Sir James had borrowed from Lady Belmont for a few days, and from whence they returned to move in circles, that

they

they were all eminently formed to grace, in different ways.

Lady Belmont undertook to introduce the foreign ladies to the fashionable world, a kind office, in which she was assisted by her daughter, Miss Celestina ; while the honourable Mr. Belmont, her son, lost no opportunity of hinting to Brinboc his thorough knowledge of horse-flesh, and his extraordinary skill in driving four in hand ; an endowment in which he rivalled the most expert coachmen in the kingdom.

By the help of a little prudence and management, however, Sir James and Brinboc both contrived to have only just as much of this polite persecution as was absolutely unavoidable ; and then they had it in their power to indulge in pleasures of a less common, though, perhaps, not less valuable nature, by giving way to their

their taste for rational amusement, in the society of a limited number of friends, with the greater number of whom the reader is already acquainted.

We cannot relinquish the task that we imposed upon ourselves, by becoming the biographers of M. de Brinboc, without informing our readers, with a degree of satisfaction in which we are sure that they will participate, that the infamous Chevreville, who contributed, in some degree, to the misfortunes of our hero, and still more to the sufferings of the gentle Eugenie, paid at last the forfeit of his crimes, though, perhaps, not in proportion to the extent of their number and atrocity, by ending his days in solitary confinement, in one of the prisons of Paris, some years later than the period at which this history is supposed to terminate. We beg leave also to add, that the interpretation
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of M. de Brinboc's dream, as related in the fourth chapter of this work, may be speedily expected, from the unwearied exertions and penetrating genius of two learned German professors, whose great proficiency in the philosophical systems of Kant and Fichte render them peculiarly well qualified for labours of this sort.

F I N I S.

